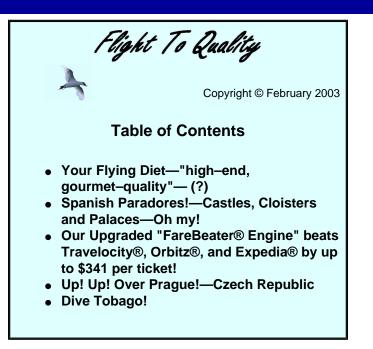
Psssss.....t!

Your One-Stop Information Center! Your Air! Your Hotel! Your Car! Your Cruise! Your Complete Travel! Above! Over! Through!...and...Under! We serve You!



Welcome! to Psssss.....t!—Your Flight To Quality eZine—Your One-Stop Information Center. Here is everything you need!—

Your Flying Diet "high-end, gourmet-quality"



What's worse than airline food? Airlines eliminating in-flight meals. What's worse than that? Airlines now *selling* you in-flight food service. U.S. carriers now offer you both options in their cost cutting frenzy.

A United Airlines executive recently came up with a brilliant way to offer you a different type of "flying experience." Immediately, their food service was dramatically cut back. What else is new, you may ask? The surprise innovation this time is that United has cut back on food for its First Class and Business Class passengers. Only beverages—no food at all—is served on flights under 2–3 hours outside of "normal meal times." Cold salads and deli plates now replace hot lunches and dinners—except on coast–to–coast nonstops.

This rampant lunacy is a shining example of being "penny–wise and pound–foolish." First Class passengers pay about \$1000 more per ticket than those in Coach Class. This \$1000+ is definitely enough for United to spend a few extra dollars on food. Yes!—United urgently needs to increase revenues! But!—it has just discouraged its most valuable customers from flying with them. The savings itself is no more than \$5—at the most! For this!—United risks losing \$1000+ extra revenue from First Class passengers. So now—enjoy the "experience of flying United" promoted in its newest advertising campaign.

US Airways also has cut back. Some changes are—elimination of hot meals on transcontinental and Caribbean flights, less food offered on their Shuttle flights, and even the elimination of fruit baskets in Business Class on their international flights.

Northwest is testing a program to *sell* you food on flights that have no meal service. Their test gives Coach passengers the option of buying "high-end, gourmet-quality" meals such as cinnamon streusel twists and fresh fruit—or a turkey club sandwich made with sliced deli meat. Their \$10 sandwich basket comes with a side salad, fruit, bottled water and cookies.

On other Northwest flights, except for transcontinental, First and Business Class, hot lunches are replaced by a deli plate—or salad. In Economy, beverages and a snack mix substitute for a hot breakfast on flights lasting two to three–and–a–half hours. On transcontinental flights a hot breakfast sandwich replaces the former choice of two hot breakfast entrees. On overnight flights from Hawaii to the West Coast, the bill–of–fare has been switched from sandwiches—to beverage only.

Meanwhile, America West and Delta Airlines have begun testing to see if Coach passengers will pay extra for in-flight food.

On some Coach flights from Phoenix, America West sells—a snack box with Rondele cheese, Wheat Thins, nuts, teriyaki beef jerky and cookies for \$3. A large bowl of fresh fruit costs \$5. Their entree—Chicken Kiev with salad, baked potato, green beans and dessert—sells for \$10.

On Delta flights, from New York to Florida, food for sale includes—Mrs. Fields cookies, Entenmann's cinnamon rolls and Pizzeria Uno sandwiches, priced from \$2 to \$7.

This topic can be a monologue from a late-night talk show host—"Airlines are so starved for money, they're starting charge for airline food! I took a flight and guess what I ate......and paid......."

But it's no joke!

Once standard service, meals have become more scarce. Major airlines are trying to survive one of the worst industry downturns in aviation history. Travelers favor low–cost carriers that skip frills and offer lower fares.

"Pay for airline food?"—Will customers open their wallets for the often—criticized airline food? This remains to be seen. Airports offer a great variety of food you can easily bring onto the plane. It hardly seems worth being "nickeled and dimed" for your flying diet!



Spanish Paradores!— Castles, Cloisters and Palaces—Oh my!

Castles, cloisters and palaces in Spain never die—they just become Paradores.

The word "Parador" (or stopping place) appears in many classical Spanish texts. While the Posada (inn) was the place where animals were stabled for the night (travelers were not considered to be guests there), the Parador was the lodging offered to persons of more respectable rank.

Based on this tradition, the Marques de la Vega–Inclan, Royal Tourist Commissioner in 1926, had the idea of establishing a chain of State Paradores. The project was personally approved by King Alfonso XIII.

The first Parador was constructed in the Gredos mountain (Madrid) range and was directly related to the sport of kings—the hunt. Later as tourism and travel became popular, Paradores were opened with distances

corresponding to an easy day trip in the automobiles of the time. This led to the creation of the Parador of Manzanares and Bailen, Oropesa and Merida. Currently the Paradores network consists of 85 properties.

The basic philosophy of the Paradores was, and continues to be—the State providing hotel accommodation in areas not profitable for private enterprise to do so. However—there is a second aspect to the Marquis de la Vega-Inclan's initial concept. To take advantage as much as possible—of ancient monuments, palaces, castles, old hospices, and convents for building the Paradores.

Visit the Paradores! Make the pleasantly surprising discovery that you are sleeping in the same room in the Castle of Jarandilla de la Vera—where Charles V is said to have stayed while waiting for his lodgings in the nearby Yuste monastery to be prepared. Dine in the rooms which once belonged to the Alcalá de Henares University founded by Cardinal Cisneros. Spend a few days in the Hondarribia castle—where the Prince of Conde led an unsuccessful siege three hundred years ago.

You can find Paradores in—

Click to enlarge this map then place cursor on lower right corner and click icon...

Antequera—A visit to this historical Andalucian town takes you back almost 5,000 years in time, beginning with the Bronze Age and the native Iberians. The timeline is there to be followed in this fascinating city's profusion of burial mounds, dolmens, Roman baths, a Moorish Castle, Gothic churches, Renaissance fountains and baroque bell towers.

 Image: State of the state

The first sighting of Antequera in the distance is

that of a typical medieval town, with the spires of her many churches and the walls and towers of the great Moorish fortress silhouetted against the sky. Spread out in the valley below lie rich farmlands irrigated by the Guadalhorce River. For centuries this has been one of Andalucia's most fertile areas, and is currently a leading producer of asparagus, cereals and olives. In summer, its fields turn brilliant yellow with sunflowers. The town and valley are overlooked by an enormous crag of limestone, 880 metres high, called La Peña de los Enamorados, or "The Lovers' Leap". The name comes from a local legend about an impossible love affair between a young Christian man from Antequera and a beautiful Moorish girl from nearby Archidona, who were driven to the top of the cliff by the Moorish soldiers, where, rather than renounce their love, they chose to hurl themselves into the abyss.

Arcos de la Frontera—Relax when you arrive at this ancient Arab town. Now a historical monument, Arcos de la Frontera is situated on cliffs high above the River Guadalete, 20 miles (32km) east of Jerez de la Frontera—where sherry was put on the map A typical defensive hill village, cobbled streets lead up to a castle which was built in the fifteenth century on Moorish foundations. The view from the castle and village is staggering. Stay at the Parador Casa del Corregidor (an old vicar's home). Perched along the edge of a cliff, walks from there in almost any direction offer spectacular views of this pueblo blanco (white village) of whitewashed Andalusian houses.

Carmona—Located on a low hill overlooking a fertile plain, Carmona is a picturesque, small town with a magnificent 15th century tower built in imitation of Seville's Giralda. This is the first thing you see and sets an appropriate tone for the place. Not surprisingly, given its proximity, Carmona shares a similar history to Seville, and was an important Roman city, which under the Moors was often governed by a brother of the Sevillan ruler. Later Pedro the Cruel built a palace within its castle which he used as his royal residence in the country. Dominating the ridge of the town are the massive ruins of Pedro's palace, destroyed by an earthquake in 1504 and now taken over by a gracious parador.

Jávea—Framed by the Capes of La Nau and Sant Antoni on the shores of the Mediterranean sea, this beautiful town in the Costa Blanca is protected from continental winds by the mountainous barrier of the Montgó. Nature has been generous and splendid to this traditional seafaring community. The sea is pure blue, clean and revealing. The mountain, washed by the Mediterranean sea, offers lush vegetation and many local species of flora and fauna.

Nerja—On the Costa del Sol at the Balcón de Europa (Balcony of Europe) lies this Mediterranean gem, with a palm–shaded promenade jutting out into the sea, from the edge of a towering cliff. Once the site of a great Moorish castle, and lined with antique iron lampposts, the village overlooks a pretty beach and fishing fleet—on a sloping site at the foot of a wall of jagged coastal mountains. The old quarter of the town is still virtually unchanged with narrow, winding streets, whitewashed houses with wrought iron terraces overflowing with geraniums, on which a canary can sometimes be heard singing.

Ronda—The site appears inhospitable—a gorge slices through the town center. Twin halves are interconnected with bridges that are antiques in their own right. The winding streets of this old Moorish town are perfect for wandering, and the views of the surrounding Andalusian countryside are stupendous. Ronda is also revered by bullfighting fans, both for its bullring (the oldest and most beautiful in Spain) and the region's skill in breeding the fiercest bulls in the country.

A trip to the Paradores is not only a trip through the land of Spain but also through its history—from the later Middle Ages through the modern architectural styles of the twentieth century—

Find more paradores—

<u>Click here for enlarged map</u> then place cursor on lower right corner and click icon...

Our 3 day package prices vary from \$169-\$375 per person—based on double occupancy. These include—

- Two nights accommodation
- Breakfast daily
- Three days economy manual car

If you wish to try the highly praised traditional cuisine (unique to the area where your Paradore is situated), request a package including dinner.

Make your reservation now— Vacation in Spanish Paradores!

"FareBeater® Engine"

beats Travelocity®, Orbitz®, and Expedia® by up to \$341 per ticket!

You have just found some money you didn't know was missing!

It has arrived! During 2002 we toiled away. We just added the final enhancements to our new version of FareBeater® Engine. This week our brand new FareBeater® Engine was released. It—

- is more "user friendly!" than before
- consistently returns very competitive fares
- provides an incredible selection

Our new **FareBeater® Engine** consistently beats our competitors in price and selection. In a recent study conducted by Topaz International, Ltd., a Portland, OR based airfare auditing firm, our new **FareBeater® Engine** airfare booking engine returned the lowest international fares versus top Internet travel sites—

- Travelocity®
- Orbitz®
- Expedia®

Our new FareBeater® Engine-

- won or matched the "lowest fare" ranking in 50% of all searches.
- returned a lower fare nearly twice as often as Orbitz®, the closest competition.
- saved an average of \$45 per ticket versus Orbitz®.
- saved an average of \$82 per ticket versus Expedia®.
- saved an average of \$341 per ticket versus Travelocity®!
- consistently returns the lowest fares for international travel.
- consistently returns the lowest fares for domestic itineraries.

Take our new **FareBeater® Engine** for a Test Drive! Compare our new **FareBeater® Engine** with the "Internet Big 3"...and save your Travel Dollars!

When you research your next flight, visit me and see if I offer your lowest fare. Visit me now-

Find My Lowest Air Fare on FareBeater®!

P.S. Our new **FareBeater® Engine** searches millions of airfares to match your request, including our exclusive database of negotiated rates. We bring you your lowest fares available in less than one minute.

P.P.S. You have just found some money you didn't know was missing!

Up! Up! Over Prague! Czech Republic

Prague—1000 Years of Cultural & Architectural Brilliance

Explore with us, on foot, by car and by balloon, one of the most beautiful and interesting cities in Europe. Its Bohemian spirit survived its bout



with Stalinism and the charming atmosphere of old Prague has surfaced again. With extraordinary permission to launch our small fleet of balloons directly from the center of the historic "Old Town Square," as well as several interesting park locations scattered throughout the city, the visit to the Prague we offer is, in short, quite remarkable.

Two thirds of each day is devoted to visiting the most interesting attractions of the city with the very able help of our two delightful local guides. The remaining third is spent floating at low level across ten centuries of architectural wealth. Prague was spared the bombing of World War II and almost half the 3,507 buildings now, standing on Prague's original medieval ground plan, are under landmark protection. We take great pleasure in offering our guests extremely well planned and delivered programs wrapped in first-class splendor.

There's Something About Ballooning—The inflation of our giant balloons is by itself a memorable spectacle. Our low–level flights are full of delightful discoveries. We call them "aerial nature walks." Frequently we float low enough to pick leaves off the tops of trees and even to speak to people in their gardens as we slowly drift by. When you arrive in a nine–story–high balloon, you aren't exactly sneaking into town. That makes our spirited landing celebrations, shared with the local people, all the more famous and full of fun.

Aristocracy & Just Plain Folks—Your trip presents many opportunities to meet and talk with the friendly people of the European countryside, as well as some of Europe's most colorful aristocrats. We often make frequent landings during a flight to visit with fascinated local people who find us, not just ordinary tourists, but very interesting travelers. The instant friendship and generous hospitality we are able to generate for our guests by landing at castles, farmhouses and in picturesque villages in giant flower decorated balloons is legendary. We are frequently invited right into private homes and really do "meet the people."

Camaraderie—The very nature of our trips attracts an interesting type of person. They are eager to reach out for a meaningful travel experience. In sharing the unusually delightful adventures we create, our guests frequently comment on the pleasing sense of camaraderie they find traveling with us.

Fine Dining & Fine Wine—Excellent food and brilliant presentation are central to every meal served on our journeys. Great effort is taken to arrange each luncheon and dinner in a different setting providing as wide a range as possible to sample the very best cuisine of each region. Regional wines, complimenting the cuisine, are served daily with lunch and dinner.

Art & Culture and Other Attractions—Guided visits to major cultural and tourist attractions, carefully chosen for cultural diversity and quality, comprise two thirds of each day.

Luxurious Accommodations—The elegance and charm relished by European sojourners for centuries is captured for our guests through the selection of the finest first–class hotel accommodations.

Prague—September 8–13, 2003— 6 days/5 nights—\$8,490 pp/do (single supplement \$866). Make your reservation now— Prague—September 8–13, 2003

Note: Rates/Dates are 2002—2003 Rates/Dates soon!

Prague—Fresh air! Vacationers and locals cruise on the Vltava, drink and dine outside near Charles Bridge, and visit Hradcany Castle in the distance.



Prague Czech Republic Itinerary September 8–13, 2003

Day One—

- Mid-afternoon check-in at the Prague Inter-Continental Hotel, your home for the next six days.
- Welcome cocktail party at 7:30 p.m.
- Dinner will be served at 8:00 p.m. in the rooftop restaurant of your hotel with its spectacular view of the floodlit towers and spires of Prague.

Day Two-

- Early morning balloon flight across Prague.
- Guided visit through the Old Town (Stare Mesto) which, from the 10th century, grew gradually out of
 settlements scattered on the right bank of the Moldau River. To this day its medieval ground plan has
 not changed. A large number of architectural masterpieces have been preserved. Almost the entire
 three square kilometers of the original town is reserved strictly for pedestrians.
- After lunch in a charming local restaurant our sightseeing will continue.
- Late afternoon return to our hotel. Remainder of afternoon at leisure.
- This evening we will dine in one of Prague's fine restaurants.

Day Three—

- Early morning balloon flight across Prague. Guided visit through Prague Castle and St. Vitus Cathedral, the Royal Palace, and the maze of medieval streets and lanes that make up Mala Strana (the Lesser Quarter). Its picturesque character is delightfully different from that of the Old Town of Prague on the other side of the River Moldau. After a catastrophic fire in 1541, newly rich nobility and the church built magnificent palaces and ecclesiastical buildings. The neighborhood is surrounded by a largely residential town most strikingly marked by the Baroque style of architecture.
- Luncheon in another choice restaurant.
- Your guided visit will continue crossing the Charles Bridge which dates form 1357. Only foot traffic is allowed on this grand structure, one of the great meeting places of the city and always full of life. From its center there is a beautiful panoramic view Of Prague and "The Castle." It is best known for its openair gallery of 30 Baroque statues which line both its sides.
- Free-time.
- Dinner in a fine restaurant near "The Castle."

Day Four—

- Early morning balloon flight across Prague.
- Escorted visit to Karlstejn Castle built in 1348. It is an imposing Gothic fortress built on a 1000 foot high limestone rock and is known for the magnificent decoration of its church and palace interiors including its royal private apartments. The imperial Czech coronation jewels, various holy relics, as well as most

of the important state documents of the time were kept here.

- Luncheon in a country restaurant near Konopiste.
- Escorted visit to Konopiste. Built as a castle in about 1300 it became the home of the successor to the Austrian throne, Franz Ferdinand d'Este. His assassination at Sarajevo in 1914 was the event that precipitated World War I. His collection of 15th and 16th century tournament armor and rare firearms is excellent.
- Free time.
- Dinner in Prague.

Day Five—

- Early morning balloon flight.
- An enjoyable boat trip on the Moldau River through the historical center of Prague.
- Luncheon in old Prague.
- Free time to shop, and explore Prague.
- Dinner in old Prague.

Day Six—

- Early morning balloon flight across Prague.
- Farewell luncheon in the rooftop restaurant of your hotel, the Prague Inter-Continental, for a parting panoramic view of this magnificent city of "a hundred spires."

Prague—September 8–13, 2003— 6 days/5 nights—\$8,490 pp/do (single supplement \$866). Make your reservation now— Prague—September 8–13, 2003

Note: Rates/Dates are 2002-2003 Rates/Dates soon!

Most Frequently Asked Questions about our company and programs—

- What is The Bombard Society? The Bombard Society, founded by Buddy Bombard in 1977, is one man's vision of how he would like to entertain his friends. We are a creative company comprised of hosts, pilots, guides and ground crew committed to offering gentle travel adventures characterized by unsurpassed luxury and service, which allow our guests to meet people, go places and take part in activities denied the ordinary tourist. We offer twelve different programs in six countries, and use the unique qualities of balloon flight to greatly enrich your visits to areas of remarkable beauty, character and interest. One of our guests summed it up telling us, "You're really in the entertainment business. You give us a new show every day."
- Who is Buddy?—Buddy holds a multi–engine airplane license with 1,275 hours as a pilot in command, has had 29 years of experience with balloons, and has logged an additional 4,660 hours as a commercial balloon pilot. For 11 years he was president of a highly successful 14,000 member travel organization, The Chalet Club, for which he created many elegant and unusual vacation ideas. His background includes training as a photographer, glider pilot and scuba instructor, with extensive experience in river running, skiing and yachting. During 22 years of active sailing, he completed two transatlantic crossings in small sailing yachts and served as a first string crew member during four America's Cup races aboard Vim, Weatherly, Constellation and Intrepid.
- How is a typical day spent? Approximately one-third of your day will be devoted to balloon-related activities and two-thirds to sightseeing and enjoying the fine foods and wines of the region.
- Do we change hotels often? No. Each stop is at least four nights in the same hotel. We unpack only once, and settle in.
- Is age a consideration in making the trip? Absolutely not. Age is no barrier to thoroughly enjoying our "flights of fancy." Our youngest guest was six years old and our most mature, 91.
- What is the size of your staff on each trip? There are nearly as many Bombard staff members on

each trip as there are guests, and our pilots not only fly your balloon, they also accompany you every step of your trip—all to assure our guests a wonderful and memorable experience.

- What is your advice about photography? With the beautiful balloons and all the smiling faces they produce, even a single–use camera will create a marvelous record of your trip. Calculate how much film you would normally use on a trip of this length, and then bring at least twice as much!
- Which time of year is best? The one you choose! Each of our eight months from May through October plus January and February has its own distinct personality and advantages, providing a consistent level of enjoyment. Choose your favorite season for travel.
- Other Destinations include—Austria | France | Italy | Switzerland | Turkey. Contact us for more information—

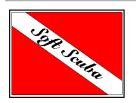
Prague—September 8–13, 2003— 6 days/5 nights—\$8,490 pp/do (single supplement \$866). Make your reservation now— Prague—September 8–13, 2003

Note: Rates/Dates are 2002-2003 Rates/Dates soon!

Stay current with Your One-Stop Information Center!—Your Air! Your Hotel! Your Car! Your Cruise! Your Complete Travel! Above! Over! Through!...and...Under!— Subscribe to "Psssss.....t! Your Flight To Quality webZine"—**Psssss.....t!**

Subscribe Me Now

and receive your FREE eGift



Soft Scuba

"The Soft Scuba Adventurer"

It's taken over a year to refocus our dive adventure travel operation. We sent many of you directly to our suppliers. I look forward to working with my clients and you who have contacted me over the years.

As you know, I specialize in the Caribbean and South Pacific destinations. At this time I am extending my research to include the Mediterranean. I hope you will enjoy the following URL regarding dive adventure opportunities in Spainish waters—

Dive Center Blaumari



Dive Tobago!



obago, the little sister island to Trinidad, West Indies, is located about 1,650 miles southeast of Miami—about a 3.5–hour jet ride away. Tobago, along with Trinidad, are unusual for Caribbean Islands—geologically they were once part of South America and you can see the Andes reflected in the high mountains of both islands. Tobago has the oldest protected rain forest (since 1776) in the western hemisphere. Tobago is ideal for nature-lovers—above water and below water—with an abundance of various birds and plants as well as the whole spectrum of warm-water sealife. Why is Tobago a world-class dive destination?

- The Guyana Current moves slowly up the eastern coast of South America, divides around Trinidad and washes the south and east coasts of Tobago. Fed by the Orinoco River, the water is warm and rich in nutrients, ideally suited to sustain a wide range of marine life. Many deep sea fish are found here much closer to the surface than normal. Divers have little difficulty sighting barracudas, dolphins, whale sharks and turtles as well as manta rays. Smaller fish abound—butterfly fish, Queen and French angels, damsels, parrotfish, grunts. Rarer species such as tarpon and trigger fish are regular residents.
- A mainly volcanic island, with green hills falling steeply into the sea, below the surface the cliffs form
 rocky canyons, underwater tunnels, deep and shallow caves. The currents drift past sheer walls and
 giant rock-faces. Every known species of hard coral and most of the soft corals—as well as the world's
 largest known brain coral, 12–feet high and 16–feet across, dwarfing the divers who explore it, are
 found here.
- The visibility regularly reaches 130–150 feet and 40 feet is considered a really bad day.

Clear, warm water, and the abundance of a great variety of sea life surrounding Tobago makes for a spectacular, dynamic, marine drama constantly changing shape, motion, color and texture—an ideal environment to better understand and to become more in tune with Natural forces.

Diving—Divers and underwater photographers are enthralled with the visibility of Tobago's waters. Water is in constant motion and the corals gorge themselves on the abundant nutrients becoming large, healthy, colorful gardens where one can become lost in wonder and meditation drifting effortlessly with the current.

Most dive sites are about a 15–20 minute boat ride away. The small, fast, safe, relatively comfortable, and very seaworthy boats used by most operators provide short rides and provide very safe, rewarding underwater experience. The exceptional expertise of the DMs is matched by their knowledge, friendliness and ability to work with and guide every level of diver experience.

However, while Tobago's dive sites are better appreciated by the intermediate to advanced diver, there are sufficient sites to enthrall the newly-certified diver. AND, the larger, more comfortable dive boats are beginning to show up amongst Tobago's operators. With the advent of these larger, social boats, the option of a giant stride off a dive platform is provided, instead of only a backward roll entry off the side of a smaller boat.

Weather & Water—Year round air temperature averages—70–90 deg.F. with lows ~60 deg.F. and highs ~90 deg.F. Water temperature ranges between 72 deg.F. to 82 deg.F. Visibility runs between 60 to 130+ feet, and is usually around 90 feet.

Manta Lodge—located in Speyside, was developed, designed and built by a

group of professionals whose main goal was to create a tropical beach front getaway with family style hospitality, and to encourage scuba divers, bird watchers, artists and nature lovers. It is located on the beach front and has 22 bedrooms, each with a view of the ocean, private bathroom and balcony with a choice of ceiling fan or airconditioning. Manta Lodge is home to Tobago's long established dive operation—**Tobago Dive Experience**.



Tobago Dive Adventure Special \$799 per person!

- 7 Nights accommodation in Standard Room, double occupancy, Manta Lodge
- Breakfast and Dinner daily
- 10 tank boat dives for 2 divers
- Tanks, weights, belts, boat and dive guide
- Round trip airport transfers
- Rum punch on arrival
- Hotel and diving taxes and hotel service charge

Tell me more about Tobago Dive Adventures!

Soft Scuba— Voice: (941) 331-2086 Fax: (208) 955-7705 Email us now: <u>Soft Scuba</u>

We offer you more Dive Adventure Destinations. Visit us now!— <u>Soft Scuba</u>

Stay current with Your One-Stop Information Center!—Your Air! Your Hotel! Your Car! Your Cruise! Your Complete Travel! Above! Over! Through!...and...Under!— Subscribe to "Psssss.....t! Your Flight To Quality webZine"—**Psssss.....t!**

Subscribe Me Now

and receive your **FREE** eGift

If you missed any of our previous issues, they can be found in our Archives—in Acrobat PDF format you can also get your FREE Acrobat Reader here— Psssss....t!—Past Issues...