





elcome to Volume 3 of our newsletter for 2018. In this edition, we have lots of travel stories to tell as well as features on some of our magnificent worldwide destinations. Read how you can voyage to the North Pole with Poseidon Expeditions, or cruise the Amazon River in absolute comfort on board the luxurious Aria with Aqua Expeditions.

Some gorgeous African lodges are showcased, including the new andBeyond Bateleur Camp in

Kenya and Settler's Drift Lodge in South Africa's malaria-free Eastern Cape. We also have a page announcing an exciting new musical celebrating the life of Nelson Mandela, and a special piece about this visionary, as July 18 this year marked the centenary of his birth.

Two new destinations are featured under the inaugural banner 'Natural Focus Active'. These trips are for those of you who love more active adventures such as cycling and hiking, but with 5-star cuisine, exceptional service and boutique accommodation. See our new premium cycle tours of Europe (p33) which cater for both serious cyclists and non-cycling partners on the same trip.

Pages 34/35 cover our recent visit to Scotland, which included plenty of hiking across hills and glens, inspiring us to see more of this beautiful country. We feel it will fit in well with our cruises to Iceland and Greenland, so watch this space for a whole lot more land-based, active adventures!

Sofren ameron Sandamen

Stephen and Sara Cameron - Founders

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OUR 2019 BROCHURES ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Please call us on 1300 363 302 to order your copy or visit africanwildlifesafaris.com.au to download them.













Front cover photograph courtesy of: Singita Game Reserves. Internal photographs courtesy of: @wanderinjon, Abhishek Hajela, Aditya Singh, African Bush Camp, Alaskan Dream Cruises, Alto Atacama Desert Lodge & Spa, and Beyond, Anne-Marie Zambelli, Aqua Expeditions, Atua Enkop Lodges, Banff and Lake Louise Tourism, Caroline Culbert, Charles Brightman, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Farewell Harbour Lodge, Georgia Cowling, Graham Adkins, Ilala Lodge, Jamie Zajicek, Julian Matthews, Kariega Game Reserve, Kate Witton, Leela Hotels, Letaka Safaris, Natural Selection, Orange Country Kabini, Paul Frank, Paul Zizka, Poseidon Expeditions, Rocky Mountaineer, Sabi Sabi, Shutterstock, South African Tourism, Stephen & Sara Cameron, Taj Hotels, Tigerwatch, Tirath Singh, Travel Alaska, VIK Hotels, Wayn Wong, Wild Horizons, Wilderness Scotland. Rear cover photograph courtesy of: Abhishek Hajela.

DRUMBEAT



BESPOKE WINE TRAILS

Experience South Africa's gorgeous Cape Winelands like a local. AWS has teamed up with Sydneysider and wine connoisseur Michael Nash, whose 5-star wine tours overflow with money-can't-buy experiences.

In addition to luxury accommodation and limo transfers, included on every departure are gourmet masterclasses, rare vintage tastings and exclusive chats with the country's leading chefs.

Gain insider access to acclaimed restaurants and historic vineyards with your charismatic guide, discovering a melting pot of cultures, beautiful Cape Dutch architecture and mouth-watering cuisine in quaint towns such as Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Constantia.

Departures are on-demand for private groups of 4+. Contact our Africa specialists on 1300 363 302.



HISTORY RE-WRITTEN

Located at a river crossing point once favoured by early colonial explorers, newly constructed Old Drift Lodge is the closest property within the Zambezi National Park to mighty Victoria Falls. Lavish canvas-clad suites overlook the Zambezi River, while the activity menu is designed to showcase the area's abundant wildlife.



MANA POOLS MAGIC

Historic Chikwenya Camp re-opens this October under the Wilderness Safaris umbrella, offering unrivalled luxury and access to a sublime stretch of the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe's UNESCO World Heritage-listed Mana Pools National Park. Expect extraordinary gameviewing amid the giant acacia and mahogany trees that characterise this beautiful region.

REMEMBER TO BOOK EARLY

We specialise in small, boutique lodges and wild destinations - as such, space is often limited. Please ensure you book early to avoid disappointment.



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We love to know how your trip went and we warmly welcome your feedback. Send us an email, photos or even videos of the places you saw and the animals you encountered. Alternatively, leave us a Google review. We may publish this information on our websites, in our brochures or on our social media channels with your permission.









CONSERVATION UPDATE

Every client who books with us has the opportunity to donate \$10 (or more) to selected non-profit organisations in the destinations we travel to. We match these donations dollar for dollar, plus we don't charge administration fees so every cent goes towards the projects we support.

In the first half of 2018, we gave USD\$2,520.82 to the Westgate Community Conservancy which works with residents of Kenya's northern rangelands to maintain the fine balance between livestock ranching and conservation. Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls Anti-Poaching Unit (VFAPU) also received USD\$2,649.20 from us to assist with the protection of wildlife residing near the waterfall. In India, TOFTigers secured GBP£1,690.14 to fund their Village Wildlife Volunteers Program, which enlists villagers to safeguard and monitor the movements of endangered Bengal tigers.

THE TIGER GUARDIANS

In 2005, Rajasthan's tiger population was in trouble, with just 11 individuals remaining in an ever-shrinking reserve. The state government declared an emergency, and various groups sprang into action, including the police and a non-government organisation called Tiger Watch. Incredible efforts were made to employ locals to help arrest highly skilled Mogiya poachers, and when caught, these predominantly nomadic tribespeople were provided with an education and alternative livelihoods.

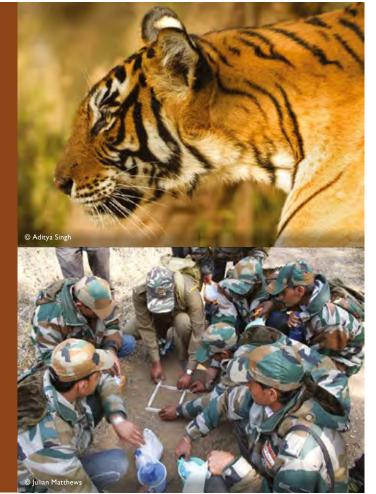
Today, Ranthambore is the finest tiger reserve in India and visitor numbers are booming. Tiger populations have reached historic highs and many rural residents now work in the tourism industry, yet these majestic felines are not out of the woods. With more tigers than the park can support, many males have been forced to carve out territory on the reserve's fringes, often coming into conflict with farmers and cattle herders.

In response to this 'tiger squash', there are generous and well-administered cattle compensation schemes. Village relocations have also taken place in order to expand park boundaries, while paid engagement of local wildlife guardians continues. Julian Matthews, Chairman of TOFTigers, who works closely with Tiger Watch also had this major achievement to report:

"Since October 2017, our village wildlife volunteers relentlessly tracked and monitored straying male tiger T-91 aka "Cowboy", and kept him safe from threats like poachers who were soon apprehended after being identified by camera traps."

With the help of the government and funding from international tour operators such as Natural Focus Safaris, T-91 was relocated to the Mukundara Hills, Rajasthan's newest tiger reserve.

To find out more about the valuable work done by TOFTigers and Tiger Watch, please visit www.toftigers.org and www.tigerwatch.net.







MADIBA THE MUSICAL

This year marks 100 years since the birth of luminary Nelson Mandela, face and fierce proponent of the antiapartheid movement in South Africa. His story inspired two French writers – Alicia Sebrien and Jean-Pierre Hadida to tell his story of peace and reconciliation through theatre. The songs impressed Australian producer Neil Croker so much that he decided to create an English language version. AWS interviews Neil about the upcoming musical:

AWS: WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND AND WHAT DREW YOU TO THIS PROJECT?

NC: I was CEO of the company that revived the iconic Palais Theatre in St Kilda. When the lease expired in 2016, an American company outbid me, so I started a concert consultancy business. Shortly thereafter, I came across this exquisite piece of French musical theatre, whose music was so uplifting and Disney-esque that I was inspired to share it with the English-speaking world.

AWS: WHAT IS MADIBA THE MUSICAL ABOUT?

NC: It's essentially a three-part story that unfolds within a timeline of factually accurate historical events. The audience first meets Mandela in his youth, as a lawyer, dedicated to fighting injustice in South Africa case by case. The central part of the show is about his time in jail, and interactions with his captors. It concludes with Mandela becoming president.

Woven throughout the plot are further stories. One is about forbidden love; the other, about a radical who learns to fight without using his fists.

AWS: SO WHEN CAN WE EXPECT TO SEE THE SHOW IN OUR THEATRES?

NC: Madiba the Musical will premiere at the Comedy Theatre in Melbourne on October 4 and run until the 28th. Following that, performances will be held in Sydney, Canberra, Perth and Adelaide









PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Melbourne | The Comedy Theatre
Thursday 4 October to Sunday 28 October 2018

Sydney | State Theatre

Wednesday I November to Sunday 18 November 2018

Canberra | Canberra Theatre

Thursday 22 November to Sunday 25 November 2018

Perth | Crown Theatre

Wednesday 2 January to Sunday 13 January 2019

Adelaide | Entertainment Centre
Thursday 17 January to Sunday 20 January 2019

Also playing in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch

FOR TICKETS & SHOW DETAILS, VISIT madibamusical.com.au

REMEMBERING MANDELA

elson Mandela was born 18th July 1918 in a small village in the Eastern Cape, and his life, his struggles and his vision became an inspiration to the world. This year is the centenary of his birth and a chance for us to remember the man fondly called "Madiba", and his belief in kindness, justice, equality and forgiveness.

Our CEO Steve Cameron has always felt especially privileged that in 1995 he stood metres from Madiba as the great man delivered his opening address at the Indaba Travel Show in Durban. It was just a year after Mandela had become President of South Africa and the thousands of attendees from Africa and around the world were in awe of his presence, his humour and humility.

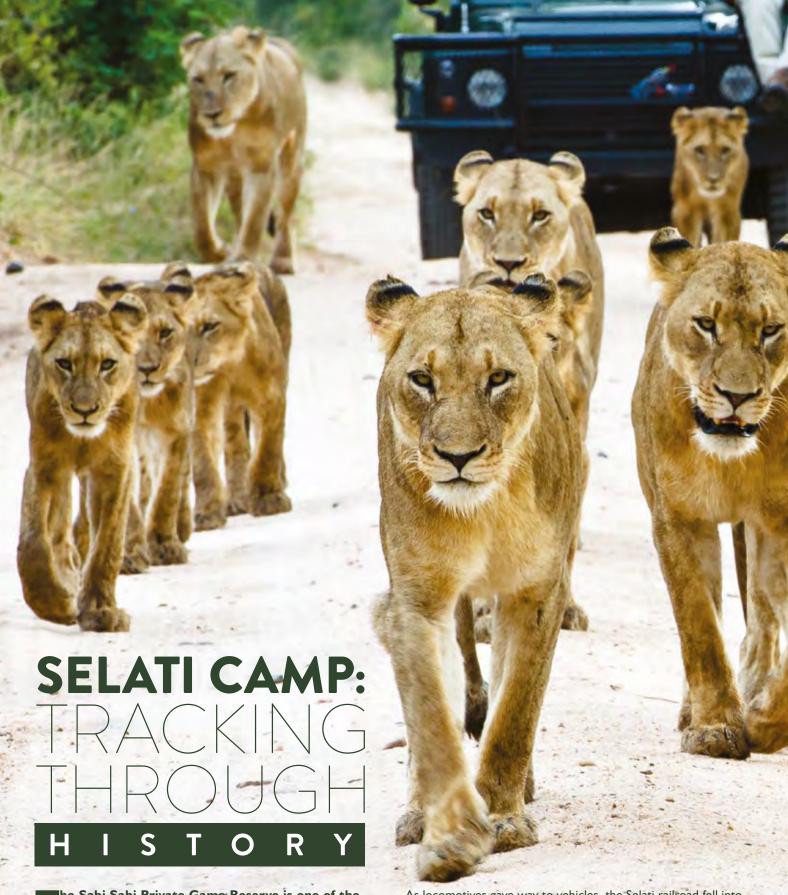
We would also like to share a story from our friends at Sabi Sabi Game Reserve, who had the honour of hosting Nelson Mandela one day at Sabi Sabi Bush Lodge. Former Operations Manager Michel Girardin was given the task of driving the President from the hastily built "heliport" to the lodge. He recalled that on arrival, the staff broke into song and dance to welcome him and Mandela promptly got out and started to do the Madiba shuffle.

On the return journey, the road was blocked by a huge bull elephant and Mandela worried he would be late because he wanted to see his stepson and wish him well before an operation. It was exactly this empathy and thoughtfulness that defined Mandela, and he will always be remembered as one of the world's most influential leaders.









The Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve is one of the finest gameviewing destinations in South Africa, sharing unfenced borders with the legendary Kruger National Park. However, at the turn of the century, this was a place where only fearless hunters and feckless gold diggers dared to tread. To transport their treasures out to the Mozambican coast, the Selati railroad was built at enormous human and financial cost. Marauding predators, disease and myriad other setbacks earned this notorious railroad the nickname "the man a mile line".

As locomotives gave way to vehicles, the Selati railroad fell into decline. Today, parts of the disused rail-bed can still be seen close to Sabi Sabi's Selati Camp, an unabashedly romantic lodge whose atmosphere is suffused with nostalgia. Every indulgent suite at this property for instance, bears the nameplate of a station that once stood along the Selati line. Priceless antiques decorate suite interiors whilst original shunter's oil lamps light the way from your room to the main areas.

The historic railway theme continues throughout Selati Camp's evocative central lounge, which is a veritable train museum, complete with a handsome old-fashioned wooden bar. The long-serving, tightly knit Sabi Sabi staff too, have a treasure trove of









stories to share, of trips to Skukuza on old steam trains and of a time before Sabi Sabi was created, when a veterinary fence separated this wilderness from Kruger.

Outside, the bushveld remains as alive as it was back when passengers had to scale trees to avoid lions, whilst waiting for the train. Guests at Selati Camp needn't worry – the only thing they have to climb are steps into safari vehicles in order to seek these big cats out. Cameras have long replaced rifles, so the only shots taken here are photographs. In fact, the extraordinary wildlife of the Sabi Sabi have become so accustomed to safari vehicles that they go about their daily business just like in the good old days - as if humans simply aren't there.

"Stepping into Selati Camp felt like travelling back in time. Yet for all the old-world charm it possessed, every modern luxury was at hand. During our stay we felt extremely well looked after. The guides and trackers here are incredible and animal sightings exclusive, so guests get a real connection with the bush. And oh, the food was absolutely top notch!"

- Clare Hedger and Georgia Cowling, AWS Africa specialists





KARIEGA:

RECLAIMING THE WILDERNESS

ariega Game Reserve is a conservation success story which started 28 years ago with the vision of one man, Colin Rushmere, who was inspired to purchase a tract of farmland in South Africa's Eastern Cape and convert it back to a home for wildlife. Over the years with the help of his conservationist wife, he added on to the reserve so that today, Kariega is a breathtakingly beautiful 10,000 hectares of wildlife-filled wilderness threaded by two abundant rivers – the Kariega and Bushman's.

Today, this malaria-free game reserve is home to a multitude of exciting African animals including the iconic "Big 5": lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo. Knowledgeable game rangers take guests out on morning and afternoon game drives in open safari vehicles, and there are opportunities for guided walks, river

Still family-owned and run, Kariega is testament to what good conservation practices can achieve. It partners in community upliftment through the Kariega Foundation. It also offers guests an authentic safari experience at their luxury safari lodge, Settlers Drift. Set in an untouched corner of the reserve, this lodge has just 9 spacious tented guest suites with verandas looking over the Bushman's River. There is also a restaurant, bar, wine cellar, spacious decks, swimming pool and spa treatments.

For more information on Settlers Drift or any of the other Kariega lodges, speak to one of our Africa specialists on 1300 363 302.











OVING LEMURS

ur Reservations Manager Kate fell in love with lemurs on her recent trip to Madagascar and after reading her report many of you might too. So if you would like to visit this extraordinary island please give Kate a call on 1300 363 302.

Madagascar had been on my wish list long before the movie appeared on our screens. I went for the wildlife, but this island nation has so much more to offer with stunning scenery and a fascinating cultural mix.

It is most famous for its lemurs, and these gorgeous primates come in all shapes and sizes, from the cheeky ring-tailed lemurs to the tiny mouse lemurs which are best spotted on nocturnal walks.

But the largest and most enchanting of the species is the Indri Indri which is found in the Andasibe-Mantadia National Park, an easy 3-hour road trip from the capital. The Indri have teddy bear ears, piercing

green eyes, and emit an eerie cry. Hiking through the dense rainforest in search of them was a highlight which was topped off when the group we found let out their territorial call.

The drier south offers more moderate hikes than the dense rainforest of the central highlands. The trees of the other-worldly spiny forest were unlike anything I'd ever seen, and the ring-tailed and sifaka lemurs which reside in this area were endlessly entertaining.

Throughout the island there are a great variety of chameleons and other reptiles, and seeking out some of these smaller creatures is an enjoyable challenge on the many possible hikes in the national parks and reserves.











've heard it said before that Zimbabwe's soul lies in the warmth and laughter of its people and truer words could not be spoken. Memories of my last visit had sadly faded, but all that changed recently when I found myself back in this extraordinary land of stoic people and rich wildlife. Arriving into the town of Victoria Falls, the air was filled with excitement, laughter and hope - a new Zimbabwe was on the rise.

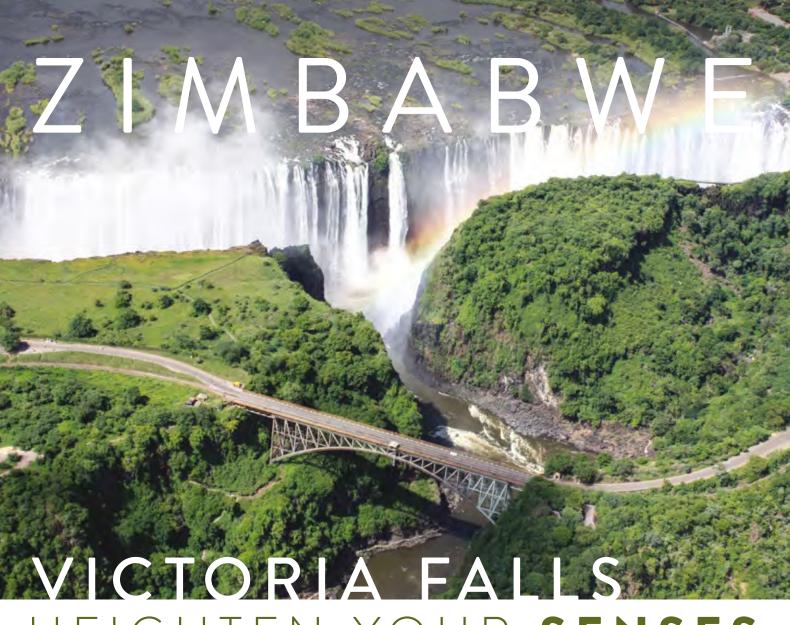
Hotels were busy as were the many attractions in and around the falls. The mighty Zambezi River was at its peak, and the most water in ten years was cascading over the 100 metre high chasm, creating the iconic Victoria Falls.

From here it is only a short light aircraft flight to Hwange National Park or if you prefer to travel by road (gameviewing part way) it will take up to four hours. On its fringes and inside this famous reserve are a wide range of small, intimate camps which offer day and night-time game viewing in open 4WD vehicles. Some also specialise in walking safaris.

As I travelled around this wilderness it occurred to me that no matter what changes were taking place elsewhere in the country, Hwange remains to this day, inexorably wild.

Anne-Marie Zambelli, AWS General Manager





HEIGHTEN YOUR SENSES

SEE the sheer beauty of the majestic Victoria Falls

A sunset Zambezi cruise is an afternoon delight and a flip in a helicopter is the best way to take in the sheer size and majesty of the waterfall, the river and the surrounding national park.

HEAR the deep sounds of nature

A highlight for me was falling asleep in my luxurious tent at The Elephant Camp - located just outside of town - with the roar of Victoria Falls cutting through the silence of the night.

TOUCH your soul with special encounters

Meet Sylvester, cheetah ambassador of The Elephant Camp, and maybe even accompany him on a walk. Interact with the Wild Horizons elephants and partake in a jumbo art class!

SMELL the scent of the bush

Explore the Zambezi National Park on a guided walk or join the Wild Horizons elephants as they saunter through the bush.

TASTE some delicious cuisine

There are many great restaurants and cafes in Victoria Falls offering excellent cuisine. The Lookout Café above the gorge is a must but please note that reservations are essential.



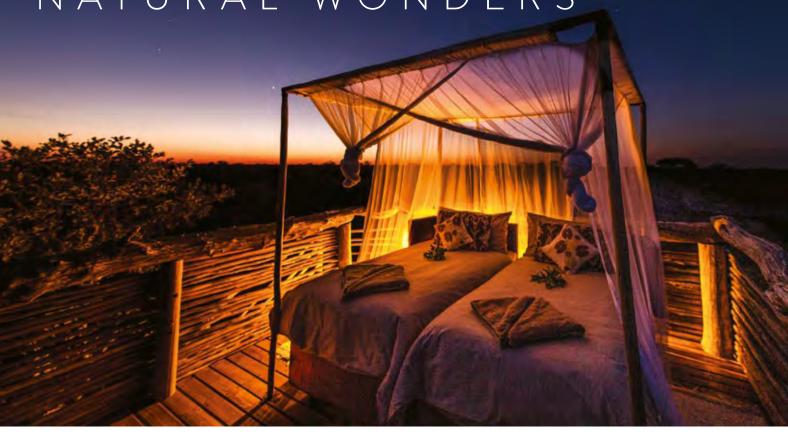








BOTSWANA'S NATURAL WONDERS



A frican Wildlife Safaris copywriter Kelly Law travelled to Botswana earlier in the year with respected operator Natural Selection. She recounts her journey from Botswana's arid Makgadikgadi Pans National Park to the watery paradise of the Okavango Delta:

Botswana is home to amazingly diverse natural wonders. The Makgadikgadi salt pans for instance, are normally dry and inhospitable. Yet after the summer rains, they are carpeted with grass. This lush growth sparks Earth's second-largest land mammal migration, and during my stay at the elegant Camp Kalahari, I was treated to the breathtaking sight of thousands of zebra dotting the landscape.

Another highlight of this desert-like area: meerkats. Some of these gregarious animals are so accustomed to Camp Kalahari guests that the bolder ones sometimes use humans as a lookout!

The Okavango Delta is perhaps Botswana's best known attraction and with so much water, it is the polar opposite of the pans. At the delta's eastern edge lies the Khwai Community Concession, a mosaic of wet and dry habitats, where we saw big cats on every game drive from Hyena Pan. We chose this safari lodge specifically because it offered an overnight sleep out at "Skybeds". We were delighted to discover that Hyena Pan also had a sensational location facing a busy waterhole and a hide from where you could spy on enormous elephant bulls.

The "Skybeds" are an isolated trio of wooden platforms, around 45 minutes from Hyena Pan. Each has a bed on the top level, open to the skies. That night, after a fireside dinner, we climbed up to our open air bedroom to marvel at how bright the stars were. The chorus of nocturnal creatures was an absolute thrill, and we even managed a few hours' sleep before waking to a stupendous sunrise.









IMMERSED IN THE WILD

ne of our Africa specialists, Georgia, recently returned from Southern Africa and a fabulous full service camping safari through Botswana (from Kasane to Maun) with Letaka Safaris.

I was lucky enough to spend 10 days travelling through Botswana on Letaka Safaris' 'Northern Highlights' departure. This full service camping safari took our small group of 6 through the wide, dusty plains of Chobe National Park's Savuti region, to the lush, green waterways in the Khwai Community Concession and the Moremi Game Reserve.

It was clear that our guide,
Shaka, had a huge amount of

experience in the bush. His knowledge about each animal was almost encyclopaedic, right down to the noises each made. One memorable morning in the Savuti region of Chobe National Park, Shaka found a leopard in a tree feasting on a fresh impala kill just by following the alarm call of a black backed jackal. That being said - it's always fun when the bush surprises you too. One afternoon, reading my book during the hottest part of the day, I looked up to find that three elephants had silently snuck into the middle of our camp and were curiously looking at our chef, Dreams.





Not only will I always treasure the incredible wildlife encounters of this trip, I will also never forget the overall experience of being immersed in the bush - the incredible landscapes of Botswana and the sparkling night sky when there's not a drop of light pollution aside from the warming camp fire each evening.

Talk to Georgia about a safari in Botswana on 1300 363 302









CAPTIVATING KENYA



With over a century of experience in purveying once-ina-lifetime safaris, Atua Enkop operates four fantastic small and intimate safari camps in three of Kenya's finest gameviewing areas. Whilst each of the properties possesses its own distinct character, features you can expect across the entire portfolio include first-rate service, gourmet cuisine and unforgettable wildlife encounters.

ELEPHANT BEDROOM CAMP: SAMBURU SENSATION

An oasis in a dry, rugged landscape, Elephant Bedroom Camp overlooks the Uaso Nyiro River, lifeline of the spectacular Samburu region. Spot species endemic to northern Kenya including endangered Grevy's zebra as well as lion, elephant and cheetah. Dine on the riverbank, uncover smaller creatures on a guided walk and interact with the local Samburu community.

MARA NGENCHE CAMP: A MARA MASTERPIECE

Another superb camp for seasonal migration viewing, intimate Mara Ngenche is tucked beneath shade trees near the confluence of two rivers. The surrounding wilderness offers animal action all year round, whilst Maasai warriors provide great in-camp entertainment. A personal plunge pool and decadent slipper bath provide refreshment at the end of every adventure.

TIPILIKWANI MARA CAMP: MIGRATION POLE POSITION

Occupying prime river frontage in the Masai Mara, warm and welcoming Tipilikwani is one of the best places to view thousands of wildebeest and zebra as they enter the Mara from the Serengeti down south. Even when the wildlife spectacle concludes, this well-appointed safari camp is situated in an area rich in permanent game and offers insightful Masai cultural visits.

MBWEHA CAMP: AN AVIAN PARADISE

A large portion of Lake Elmenteita lies within the serene Soysambu Conservancy, where the lovely lava stone cottages of Mbweha Camp are located. Flamingo often speckle this shallow soda lake, which supports over 400 bird species plus rare Rothschild's giraffe, rhino and leopard. As the property lies outside a national park, guests may walk, cycle, go on night game drives or take a camel safari. From here enjoy a day trip to the flamingo rich Lake Bogoria.







\$2569 PER COUPLE

Wings Over Kenya 6 nights ex Nairobi. Prices from \$6780 p.p. twin share. Package includes: Return transfers Nairobi to Wilson airport, domestic flights Nairobi-Samburu-Masai Mara-Nairobi, full board accommodation including local drinks (premium brands excluded) shared game drives by 4WD vehicle, Balloon Safari in the Mara, park fees & Flying Doctor membership.

For details please call us on 1300 363 302.



OUT OF AFRICA



nfused with the glamorous ambiance of classic 1920s East African safaris, the recently rebuilt andBeyond Bateleur Camp sets a new standard for tented luxury. Fittingly located where the final scene of the Academy Award-winning movie "Out of Africa" was filmed, this evocative safari camp is thoughtfully decorated with inviting Chesterfield sofas, sparkling crystalware and charming artefacts from the heyday of colonial explorations.

Its setting is unparalleled, at the foot of a dramatic escarpment in the remote western sector of Kenya's celebrated Masai Mara. This beautiful and exclusive corner of the world-famous reserve is a sanctuary for a staggering diversity of resident game, and it also lies in the path of the annual wildebeest migration. What's more, andBeyond Bateleur Camp sits upon privately leased Maasai traditional homelands, so the only other visitors you're likely to see are from Bateleur or neighbouring sister camp, Kichwa Tembo.

Some of the many species you can expect to see on a safari here include elephant, cheetah, giraffe, buffalo and of course, wildebeest. Sensitive off-road driving by experienced guides allow for close encounters with wildlife, and when the herds arrive,

and Beyond Bateleur Camp guests enjoy access to notorious crocinfested river crossing points.

As the property sits on a private concession, experiences such as nature walks and night drives are possible. In-between game activities, guests can retire to the atmospheric gin bar, dive into the refreshing swimming pool or enjoy a soothing treatment at the tranquil wellness sala. After dark, have your butler run you a bath - every suite boasts a deep copper tub where you can wash off the day's dust while soaking up the stars.





ESCORTED SMALL GROUP JOURNEYS

Our escorted small group journeys offer the best opportunities to observe India's wildlife - including the Royal Bengal tiger and Asian elephant - while providing an insight into the country's glorious past. Throughout your trip, you'll be accompanied by a tour leader whose zest for India knows no bounds.

TOUR ESCORT

A passionate traveller with over 30 years' experience in the travel industry, Anne-Marie (Annie) Zambelli's knowledge is unrivalled. As our General Manager she is an expert on all our destinations. As a tour leader she is a knowledgeable, enthusiastic and entertaining travelling companion. Captivated by India on her first trip in 2002, Annie has returned many times and this will be her 11th Taj Temples & Tigers Tour.



"My partner Denise and I very much enjoyed Taj Temples & Tigers Tour. If Annie were Japanese, she would be a National Living Treasure!! Annie's organisational skills and larger-than-life personality made for a great trip for all her clients. Indian bureaucracy would try the patience of a saint but she and Tirith ensured that any and all problems were met and overcome in a timely and efficient manner with no/minimal inconvenience caused to their guests."

- Graham Adkins

For further information and to reserve your place please call our India experts on 1300 363 302.

"I have been fortunate to travel on all 7 continents by way of plane, train, car coach and canal under the auspices of a number of travel companies; however my recent Taj, Temples & Tigers tour with Annie and her team was just the best for variety, pace and attention to detail. The colour, contrast and chaos of both urban and rural India were presented in comfort and congeniality with no question or request overlooked by our guides. Thank you for the wonderful experience – we were so fortunate to view so many of the magnificent and elusive Bengal tigers."

· Diana Hacker









HIGHLIGHTS

- Total of 12 guided tiger safaris in Bandhavgarh, Kanha and Ranthambore
- The stunning avian paradise at Bharatpur Keoladeo **National Park**
- Sunrise and sunset visit to the beautiful Taj Mahal
- The historic treasures of Delhi, Khajuraho and Jaipur
- **Accompanying Naturalist and Australian escort**

TOUR COST

EX MEL \$12.272 per person

twin share

EX SYD \$12.279

per person twin share

EX BNE \$12.296

twin share

\$12.275 per person

EX ADL

per person twin share

EX PER \$12.118

Single Supplement: \$3257. We can try to arrange shared accommodation on request. *International airfares strictly subject to availability.

TAJ, TEMPLES & TIGERS

Departing 05 Feb 2019

o in search of the magnificent Bengal tiger. Contemplate the mystery of ancient temples, grand palaces and the beauty of the Taj Mahal. We invite you to join us on this escorted tour, the main focus of which is to view the endangered tiger. Nothing can prepare you for the excitement of seeing this magnificent creature in its natural habitat, a privilege that few people will ever experience. Whilst this tour visits 3 of India's national parks there is also plenty of time for cultural experiences and historical sites.









TIGERS & SOUTHERN **DELIGHTS**

Departing 21 Oct 2019

iscover India's most impressive wildlife reserves, travelling from Delhi to the historic port city of Kochi on India's sultry southwestern coast. Search for magnificent Bengal tigers in Ranthambore and explore lush Nagarhole National Park. On your journey from north to south, travel by rail across the scenic Indian countryside, cruise along sleepy backwater canals, learn to cook traditional Keralan cuisine and embark on exciting safaris.











HIGHLIGHTS

- Total of 5 guided tiger safaris in Ranthambore
- Historic Jaipur, with its impressive hilltop fort
- 4 jungle excursions in Nagarhole National Park
- The enchanting southern capital of Mysore
- Cruise along idyllic Keralan backwaters and delicious local cuisine
- Accompanying naturalist and an Australian escort

TOUR COST

EX MEL \$13.200 \$13.216

EX BNE \$13,223

EX ADL \$13.203

EX PER \$13.045

Single travellers on request. *International airfares strictly subject to availability.











JEWEL IN THE CROWN

umbai's opulent Taj Mahal Palace is the crown jewel of the Indian Hotels Company. It was the vision of Jamsetji Tata, an Indian pioneer industrialist and founder of the global Tata Group, and became an icon that changed the Mumbai skyline forever.

Inaugurated in 1903 the hotel pre-dated the famous Gateway of India, its equally grand neighbour on Mumbai Harbour. It was the first hotel in India to have electricity and highly coveted German elevators, American fans and Turkish baths. The 3 metre high dome is an architectural wonder and the Ballroom stands on pillars of the same spun iron as the Eiffel Tower.

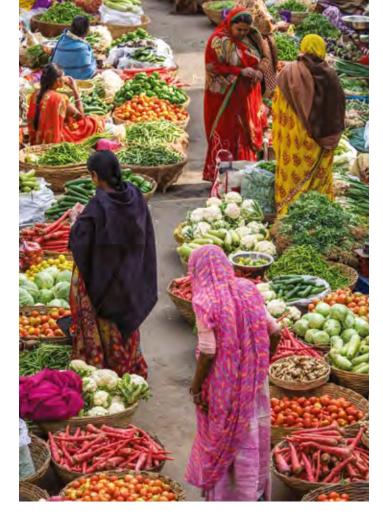
Despite being converted into a 600 bed hospital during World War I and nearly being torn down during WW II, the hotel remains the epitome of luxury. Exquisite art by Hussain, Sabavala, Ara, and

Gaitonde adorns the walls, and famous guests have included King George V and Queen Mary, Mahatma Gandhi, Indian Maharajahs, the Beatles, Bill Clinton, and Oprah Winfrey.

The 285 rooms and suites in the Palace wing blend gracious oldworld charm with luxurious modern facilities, but the Ravi Shankar Suite has a special artistic history. The Beatles' George Harrison spent 6 weeks here to learn the sitar as Pandit Ravi Shankar's disciple, resulting in compositions which exposed the western world to Indian classical music. Today it is an extraordinary amalgamation of luxury and art, adorned with photographs and displays of the Maestro's sitars and books.

For details and prices please call one of our India specialists on 1300 363 302.





A MODERN PALACE

INSPIRED BY

HERITAGE

Inter a world of lavish splendour within 16th century Udaipur, a regal city rich in historic heritage and suffused with myths and legends. This 'City of Lakes' has seven lakes and is surrounded by the scenic beauty of the Aravalli Mountains. It was recently voted third among 15 best cities in the world in a travel poll conducted by Travel + Leisure.

The Leela Palace Udaipur is a modern palace hotel that evokes the grandeur and opulence of the Land of the Mewars, home of successive generations of Maharanas. With spectacular views of Lake Pichola, the heritage city and the Aravalli mountain range, the hotel offers 80 luxuriously appointed rooms decorated with exquisite art and traditional crafts inspired by the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan.

Arrive by boat across the lake and unwind in the lap of luxury. You can expect world class recreational and dining facilities, a yoga studio, large outdoor swimming pool, and an award winning spa by ESPA. Enjoy romantic evening boat rides, local music and dance in the stunning inner courtyard, and fine dining at Sheesh Mahal with lake views. Explore the city in the hotel's tuk tuk or by rickshaw with a driver.

Guests walking through the palace gardens might discover a 150 year old temple dedicated to the mighty Lord Shiva. A local priest offers a daily ritual of prayer invoking the blessings of Lord Shiva.

To include this renowned hotel in your itinerary speak to one of our India specialists.

















ALL ABOUT ALASKA

The USA's biggest state by land area, Alaska is also home to the country's highest peak, its largest national parks and almost all of America's grizzly bears. Its capital – Juneau – is the nation's most isolated, whilst there are more glaciers and lakes than anyone can count. Alaska's sheer scale might mean a lot of ground to cover, but here are five of the best ways to appreciate this destination of superlatives.

CRUISE THE INSIDE PASSAGE

This famous sea route provides a fantastic insight into the history, culture and natural treasures of Alaska. A small ship cruise immerses travellers amid waterfall-lined fjords, enormous glaciers and lush islands. Inspect totem poles, paddle amongst seal and orca, and maybe even take a polar plunge.

VIEW MT DENALI AND THE "SLAM"

Flightseeing is a thrilling way to take in Mt Denali, North America's loftiest mountain whilst the park that encompasses it harbours wildlife of epic proportions. Tick off the "Denali Slam" – Dall sheep, wolf, grizzly, moose and caribou – on a bus trip into the park or on hikes from a cosy backcountry lodge.

SEE GRIZZLIES FISHING

Some of Alaska's heftiest grizzlies are found in Katmai and Lake Clark national parks. Protected from hunting, bears here are tolerant of incredibly close-up viewing. From mid-June to mid-September, these normally solitary animals gather in waterways to feast on migrating salmon – a sight to behold!

DOGSLED ON A GLACIER

Few things are more Alaskan than dogsledding - except mushing across a glacier. Fly over spectacular rainforests and ice-capped summits by helicopter to reach a dogsled camp where you'll learn how to steer a dog pack and hear stories about the legendary Iditared Race, run from Anchorage to Nome.

EXPERIENCE ESKIMO TRADITIONS

Visit the United States' northernmost settlement – Barrow – for a taste of authentic Inupiat Eskimo culture. Take part in a traditional blanket toss ceremony, witness a dance performance and enjoy the opportunity to dip your toes into the frigid Arctic Ocean.

To start planning your Alaska adventure, contact us on 1300 363 302.



he seas, rivers and forests of Southeast Alaska teem with wildlife, and for thousands of years have provided an abundance of nature for Alaska Natives, and later the explorers, adventurers and settlers who followed.

The Allen family, owners of Alaskan Dream Cruises, are pioneers of Alaska cruising. After nearly 50 years of operation they have an unrivalled knowledge of the land they have explored and loved, and their cruise season is carefully selected to correspond with wildlife migration patterns.

Their fleet of 5 expedition-style ships accommodate from 10 to 76 passengers, and the shallow drafts, coupled with the local knowledge of their captains and officers, enable them to navigate narrow channels and secluded coves. Each vessel is designed for optimum viewing of wilderness and wildlife, with panoramic

windows and spacious outer-viewing decks. The intimate dining and lounge area are perfect for getting to know your fellow travellers, and the well-appointed staterooms, with private baths and showers, offer a relaxing retreat from the day's activities.

These expeditions feature active exploration for travellers with a passion for adventure and hands-on discovery. Kayaks and shallowdraught skiffs allow guests to explore areas inaccessible to larger boats and special permits offer hiking opportunities in some of Alaska's most beautiful and secluded areas. Itineraries are led by naturalist guides and enriched with opportunities to discover three distinct Native cultures, the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian.

Come aboard and enjoy warm local hospitality and the chance to discover the true Alaska.















UNIQUE JOURNEY: ROCKIES & REINDEER

Talk to our Canada consultants about a unique journey in 2019 designed for those who prefer to travel off the beaten track. Experience Banff and Lake Louise before heading to Yellowknife for the Northern Lights. Fly to Inuvik in the Canadian Arctic to immerse yourself in the rich, ancient culture of the Inuit and to meet thousands of reindeer.





BANFF WINTER MAGIC

Banff National Park is one of the world's most breathtaking mountain destinations, with soaring snow-capped peaks, giant glaciers, turquoise blue lakes and truly spectacular wildlife. As Canada's first national park and the world's third, it has a rich heritage and offers endless outdoor adventures within a protected area spanning 6,641 square kilometres.

Winter is a fantastic time to visit, and from November to April the picturesque alpine towns of Banff and Lake Louise transform into magical winter playgrounds. Brilliant blue skies contrast with the sparkling white peaks and the air is the crispest you've ever breathed. There is a huge range of activities to enjoy, from active outdoor pursuits such as ice skating on Lake Louise or snowshoeing and dog-sledding through the alpine forests.

Visiting Banff National Park will make you feel like you have stepped into a nature documentary. Among the rugged wilderness, iconic Canadian animals such as moose, elk, deer, and bighorn sheep, live in their natural habitat. Winter is the perfect time of year for wildlife watching as the animals move to lower altitudes and we definitely suggest you take a guided tour for the best chance to view these incredible creatures. You may be lucky enough to see a wild animal roam the streets or late in the season grizzly bears as they come out of hibernation.

This alpine wonderland also has plenty of wonderful places to stay, from fairy-tale castles to boutique hotels and backcountry lodges.

To book your winter magic experience contact our Canada experts today.





There is a special place on Canada's magnificent west coast which is heaven for whales and one of the best places for whale watching on the planet. This is the spectacular Broughton Archipelago near the northern tip of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Every year both humpbacks and orcas return here to feed and socialise, alongside resident orcas, dolphins and porpoises.

Farewell Harbour Lodge is situated in the very heart of the Broughton Archipelago Marine Park. Nestled along the shore of this protected anchorage on forested Berry Island, the lodge offers excellent accommodation and daily guided excursions to see marine mammals and also grizzly and black bears in the Great Bear Rainforest.

While the orcas and grizzly bears are the main attraction, it is often the humpback whales who steal the show. Despite averaging 15 metres in length and weighing up to 40 tonnes, they can lift their whole body out of the water in a full breach, slamming down with a slap that can be heard hundreds of metres away.

Humpbacks spend their winters in Hawaii for mating and calving and then return to the waters around Farewell Harbour from late May to mid November. This year guests and guides at the lodge were thrilled to see the return of 'Ripple' who brought a newborn humpback calf with her back from Hawaii.

Escape to the wonders of this magical world when you stay at Farewell Harbour Lodge. For more information please call our expert Canada consultants on 1300 363 302.





"We were thrilled to see humpbacks, sea lions and orcas by boat and kayak at Farewell Harbour Lodge. Walks lent a completely different perspective and felt incredibly adventurous. During our 5-night stay, we observed grizzlies fishing and up to 50 bald eagles converging on a bait ball of fish – both incredibly exciting, especially for our children!"

- Cheryl Ryce, Mona Vale, Australia



SEEING IS BELIEVING

f your idea of a dream holiday involves awe-inspiring views and a luxury train, then Western Canada and the Canadian Rockies are a must-visit aboard Rocky Mountaineer. This multi award-winning train travels only by daylight so you don't miss a moment of the epic scenery. These are just some of the many spectacular destinations visited on Rocky Mountaineer's memorable rail journeys:

Vancouver: A stop on every route, this west coast city is a sparkling gem in Canada's crown, offering all the delights of a world-class metropolis plus the added bonus of alpine hiking trails and miles of inviting coastline.

Seattle: A booming tech industry hasn't changed Seattle's original soul. Ocean, mountains and lush evergreen forests meet music, art, coffee and culture in this compelling Pacific Northwest city.

Banff: Gorgeous lakes, towering summits and the impossibly blue Bow River make Banff a standout. A gondola, museums and excellent walking tracks add to this town's appeal.

Lake Louise: This pristine lake is surely one of the most photographed on the planet. It shares its name and stunning location beneath snow-capped peaks with an idyllic settlement set upon its shores.

Jasper: An ideal base for travellers seeking wilderness experiences before or after a Rocky Mountaineer train trip, peaceful Jasper is set inside a national park filled with jeweltoned lakes, waterfalls and glaciers.

Whistler: Host of the 2010 Winter Olympics, Whistler is a premier mountain resort that offers a wealth of exciting activities all year round. Ski in winter, hike or bike in summer. After a big day outdoors, top-rated restaurants and indulgent spas are all at your doorstep.

An 8 day/7 night GoldLeaf Service journey from Vancouver starts from \$5775 per person twin-share.

Contact our Canada experts to book your Rocky Mountaineer departure today.



ON TOP OF THE WORLD

The geographic North Pole is the northernmost point on our planet and the first time anybody actually stood there was in 1948. Since then, only a tiny handful of intrepid travellers have set foot on the shifting pack ice at 90° North. If you've ever dreamt of being a member of this privileged club, our expedition to the top of the world is for you.

This once-in-a-lifetime voyage takes place aboard the 50 Years of Victory, the most powerful icebreaker ever built, and departs thrice yearly from Murmansk in Russia, or Helsinki in Finland. Reaching the North Pole in 4 days (instead of 7) in 2008, this formidable ship holds the speed record from her home port of Murmansk, and her ability to effortlessly crush through dense pack ice never fails to astound.

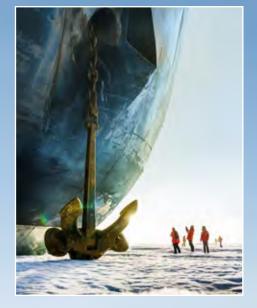
Whilst the main objective of the trip is to reach the North Pole, highlights throughout the cruise include the opportunity to enjoy helicopter scenic flights over the ephemeral blue-and-white windswept landscapes of the Arctic. Where possible, the crew will lower the gangway for passengers to stretch their legs out on firm ground. You'll also be able to join the captain and ship's officers on the bridge at any time of day, to watch for whales and other iconic polar species as you journey north.

On arrival at 90° North, disembark onto the ice for a minute's silence, to honour the many past explorers that struggled to reach this hallowed place. Then it's time for celebrations, with a festive barbecue meal if the weather permits and a chance to plunge into the icy waters of the Arctic Ocean if you dare.

Even after you've ticked the North Pole off your bucket list, there's more. The route south takes in Franz Josef Land, a wild and remote archipelago that lies wholly within the Arctic Circle. In a nimble Zodiac, you'll trace cliffs heaving with seabirds and skirt shores where polar bear and walrus roam. You may also inspect ruins left behind by failed exploratory missions.

For further information on this unique journey please contact our Arctic experts on 1300 363 302.

















Two hours southeast of Santiago lies a fabulously unique luxury retreat. Shaped like an undulating ribbon of pale gold, Viña Vik boldly vies for attention amid emerald fruit trees and tangled grapevines, with the snow-dusted Andes Mountains in the background. Inside it are even more features designed to catch the eye, from exquisite murals to striking paintings by leading international artists.

Viña Vik's owners are well-known purveyors of fine accommodation in Uruguay, but their first foray into Chile was a vineyard at this very site in the Millahue Valley, established with the help of French viticulture experts. Their VIK brand of Chilean red wines made an enduring mark in subsequent years and the construction of Viña Vik soon followed.

These days, both the VIK vintages and the hotel have set travellers' tongues wagging. No two suites at Viña Vik are the same; for instance, the colourful Valenzuela Suite houses an iconic lip-shaped sofa whilst the star of the minimalist

Vik Suite is a hammock-shaped bathtub with a view. Of course, wine tasting is a mustdo at the property, and other great activity options include:

COOKING CLASSES

Learn to prepare Chef Acuña Bravo's signature dishes, using the freshest seasonal ingredients, many of which are grown on the property.

HORSEBACK RIDING AND CYCLING

Ride between rows of well-tended grapevines as the sun sets over the picturesque Millahue Valley.

WALKS

Stroll amongst the hotel's extensive art collection, explore trails threading the surrounding countryside and unravel the secrets of good winemaking on a tour of VIK's winery.

WINE BATH

Soak in wine and fresh grapes at the spa, whose indulgent treatments incorporate powerful antioxidants derived from the vines.

To extend your Santiago city stay with a few days in Chile's Millahue Valley, speak to our South America specialists on 1300 363 302.



ATACAMA



Ito Atacama is more than just a luxury Ahotel; with a sharp focus on creating an all-round understanding of this most fascinating of places, a stay here provides the ultimate chance to engage with the High Andean Plains of Chile. Every detail has been carefully considered and planned, from the unique, eco-friendly design and perfectly manicured native flora gardens, to the string of versatile excursions created with the help of expert locals. Indoor and outdoor dining areas offer fresh organic produce and mouth-watering menus of traditional cuisine fused with contemporary techniques. Offering authenticity and tranquillity Alto Atacama lives and breathes its desert location from top to bottom.

Being an award-winning luxury lodge, there is also no shortage of world-class pampering available, courtesy of their unique underground spa and therapy rooms where you can relax and revitalise with treatments using local desert elements. Explore the jaw-dropping desert landscapes with one of the many carefully planned hiking or cycling activities; discover the fascinating indigenous Andean culture or intriguing archaeological remains. Marvel at the wonders of the night sky while visiting Alto's own open-air stargazing observatory. Alto Atacama offers all of this, and more.

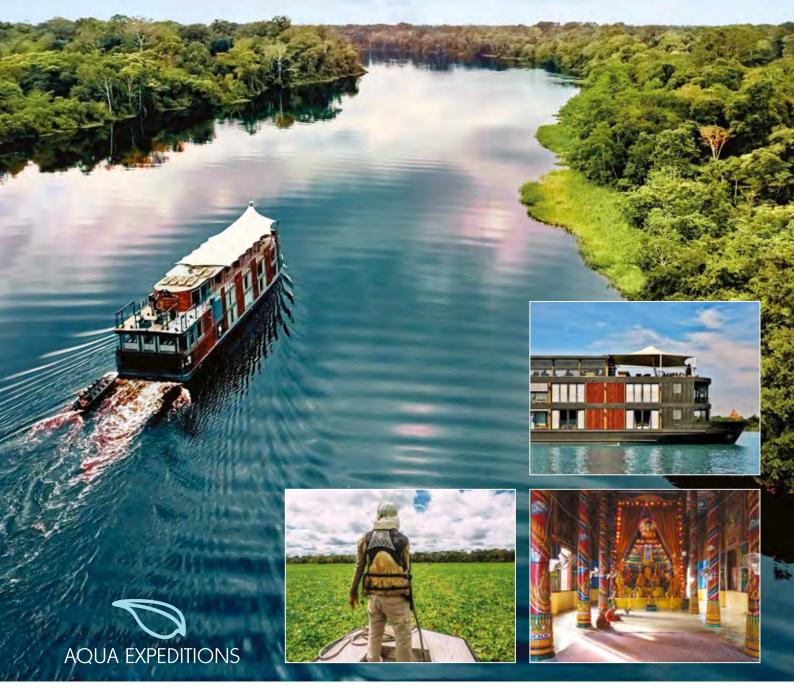








SAILING THE WORLD'S GREATEST RIVERS



ome closer to some our planet's most precious places with luxury small ship cruise specialist, Aqua. Sail down Peru's Amazon River, home to exotic bird species and enchanting pink dolphins, marvelling at the passing scenes from the comfort of your floating hotel, or while exploring on shore with naturalist guides.

The 16-suite Aria Amazon is a unique, architect-designed ship offering luxurious accommodation, spacious dining and lounge areas and delicious Amazon-influenced cuisine from renowned Executive Chef Pedro Miguel Schiaffino. Go deep into the rainforest by custom tender, or cycle, kayak, swim and fish amongst the Amazon's natural wonders.

Across the globe, Aqua explores another iconic waterway with the state-of-the-art Aqua Mekong. Cruise leisurely through the timeless landscapes of Vietnam and Cambodia, past stilt villages and flooded forests. On guided shore excursions, visit Buddhist temples, Cambodia's vast Tonlé Sap Lake and famous Angkor Wat.

The 205-foot Aqua Mekong has 20 suites with floor-to-ceiling windows, as well as a gym, screening room, outdoor cinema, observation deck and upper-deck pool. Dine on dishes created by top Southeast Asian cuisine chef, David Thompson.

For more information on Aqua's cruise programs, please call us on 1300 363 302.



CYCLING EUROPE FOR CYCLISTS & PARTNERS

or keen road cyclists the dream holiday might be exploring the famous routes of Europe on an expertly designed bike tour. But what do their non-cycling partners do? So we are very excited to be able to offer our clients a selection of premium bike tours in 2019 which are flexible enough to cater for all tastes and abilities.

Our CEO Steve Cameron has been a cyclist for over 40 years and over the past 10 years has taken part in a number of individual and group bike tours across Europe, as well as World Masters racing.

These expertly designed bike tours cater both for the cycling enthusiast and the avid cyclist who wants to experience a pro

style ride. They also offer specialised sightseeing itineraries for non-cycling partners. Each and every tour is fully researched by local pro cyclists to ensure that guests enjoy the best of everything that each region has to offer, from hard-to-find places, events and experiences, to local culture, food and wine.

Tours are flexible with the opportunity for two fully supported rides each day, or the option to join sightseeing guests or just relax by the pool at the hotel. Your hosts on tour are dynamic, highly experienced professionals, sometimes joined by up and coming young riders. Destinations include France, Italy, Spain and Cyprus.

For full details please contact Steve Cameron on 1300 363 302.















Scotland has no shortage of ravishing wilderness, from the wild fells of the Highlands to the velvet green landscapes of Skye or the mystical Orkneys. You can feel the magic of ancient standing stones, explore royal castles, and follow narrow roads into wild glens where the long-ago voices of Bonnie Prince Charlie and his brave Highlanders still seem to float on the wind.

History is everywhere; in the 5000 year old stones of Neolithic villages like Skara Brae, and the battlements of hill top castles as well as traditional fishing villages and lonely hillside crofts. Myths and legends abound, from the romantic tales of Walter Scott to modern day movies like Harry Potter and Outlander.

And Scotland has plenty of romantic places to stay, including restored castles and manor houses, traditional country houses and picturesque old inns.

On our recent visit Steve and I discovered some of western Scotland's hidden places, such as the beautiful Braes of Balquidder, pretty Arisaig, and the wild mountains of Torridon, whilst bagging a few "munros" (peaks over 3,000 feet) along the way. We also had too short a visit to Edinburgh where we managed just a few of the highlights, and stopped by the ancestral home of the Lochiel Cameron Clan at Achnacarry near Fort William.

We also spent 4 wonderful days on the idyllic Isle of Skye, hiking around the Old Man or Storr and amongst the strange cliffs and pinnacles of the Quirang, with dinner at the acclaimed Three Chimneys restaurant in a remote, white painted cottage with - of course - 3 chimneys.

A definite highlight was our stay in a restored Scottish farmhouse, now a stylish hotel, in the glen of Balquidder on the shores of Loch Voil. The weather was warm and sunny and the loch was a perfect mirror reflecting overhanging trees and steep green "braes". There were few cars and just one narrow road ending at an old farm, once the site of Rob Roy's house. The legendary outlaw is buried further down the glen in an old church nearer Balquidder village.

In the remote mountains around Loch Torridon the mist and rain came in but we were warm and cosy in the laid back splendour of a 19th century former hunting lodge, with towers and turrets, massive fireplaces, grand library, whisky bar and fine dining. The Torridon is where luxury and adventure meet, with countless outdoor activities available, from hiking to kayaking and canoeing, mountain biking and wildlife cruises.

The munros here eluded us due to the weather, which just means we'll have to go back!









NATURAL FOCUS SAFARIS Active





Scotland is ideal for outdoor adventures and we have partnered with a highly experienced tour operator to be able to offer our clients a range of guided, small group active holidays. Two wonderful escorted walking tours are featured below, and in the coming months, we will be including more of these as part of a broader Arctic and northern Europe program, including Greenland, Iceland and Norway. Please note that these trips can also be undertaken on a private basis.



7 days/6 nights
Prices from £1,695 p.p. twin share.
Comfortable Small Hotels
Departs Oban on selected dates Apr-Sep 2019
Rating: Easy (approx. 5 hrs walking per day)

Traverse the gloriously wild coast of western Scotland, taking in prehistoric sites, scenic nature reserves and whisky distilleries. A boat trip to the rarely visited island of Jura is a highlight, including a detour to view Scotland's largest tidal whirlpool. Expect to walk up to 11km a day, on trails that can be muddy or rough in places. Most meals are included, as is a whisky tasting on this memorable exploration of the Argyll Peninsula.

GLENCOE & THE HIGHLANDS

7 days/6 nights
Prices from £2,650 p.p. twin share.
Luxury Small Hotels
Departs Perth on selected dates Jun-Sep 2019
Rating: Moderate (approx. 8 hrs walking per day)

Hike two of the Scottish Highlands most beautiful regions, climbing peaks that offer sweeping views across glistening lochs. Transfer to Glencoe by Zodiac, scouting for marine life en route. Stay in two premium hotels, with time to sample single malts and to unravel the region's dark history with a charismatic storyteller. Cover around 16km of varied terrain on foot per day, with challenging ascents at times. All meals are included.

For more information on walking holidays please call James Cameron on 1300 363 302.



DISCOVER SRI LANKA

Contact Us to Start Planning Your Tailor-Made Journey on 1300 363 302