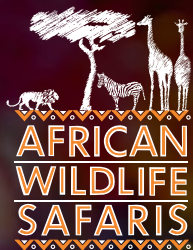


NATURAL FOCUS



THE TALKING DRUM

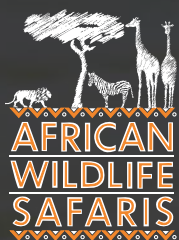
2019 – Volume 1



African Wildlife
Safaris & Natural
Focus – Worldwide
Wilderness Journeys
Your Way.




NATURAL FOCUS



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INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS

Welcome to Volume 1 of our newsletter for 2019 – in what is already proving to be a big year of travel! In this edition we have a number of wonderful travel experiences to share from both staff and clients, and look to showcase a range of new awe-inspiring destinations.

See pages 6 & 7 for your invitation to a special Exhibition and Auction of stunning wildlife photographs to raise money for conservation. Put 28 February in your diaries and come and help us support Kenya's famous Masai Mara.

To coincide with the release of the South America brochure, the spotlight is once more on this diverse continent. The unique properties of Tierra Hotels are featured, as is the breathtaking Iguazú Falls. If Patagonia has ever been on your radar, read about our new Puma tracking tour (pg 14-15) – a 6 day luxury adventure exploring the magnificent Torres Del Paine National Park in search of this elusive cat.

Africa is always close to our hearts. We feature a wonderful Nile cruise in Egypt, a destination that is soon expected to regain its popularity, and a story about travel specialist Michael's recent experience tracking the fabled Mountain Gorillas in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park. Or discover a journey of a different sort – 'A Journey with a Purpose' – helping to support conservation and community. We feel that with the growing changes our planet is experiencing, a journey with more of a conservation approach offers an even more rewarding experience.

Stephen Cameron *Sara Cameron*
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: Alto Atacama Desert Lodge & Spa. Internal photographs courtesy of: African Bush Camps, andBeyond, Andy Rouse, Anne-Marie Zambelli, Araras Eco Lodge, Arctic Kingdom, Azura Boutique Retreats, Belmond Hotels, Blachford Lake Lodge, Boomer Jerritt, Churchill Wild/Dennis Fast, David Briggs, Destination BC, Eurotur, Françoise Gervaise, Geoff Putland, Hany Elkatouri, Jason Hillier, Kate Witton, Latin Trails, Lemala, Michael Fitzgerald, Michelle Valber, Natasha Redondo, Northern Lights Resort & Spa, Northern Vancouver Island Tourism/Steven Fines, Origins Safaris, Quark Expeditions, Quasar Expeditions, Rachit Singh, Resplendent Ceylon, Reuben Krabbe, Sabi Sabi, Sanctuary Retreats, Shutterstock, Tania Neill, Tierra Hotels, Tirath Singh, Tourism Yukon, UnCruise Adventures, VIA Rail, Volcanoes Safaris, Wilderness Safaris.

DRUMBEAT

NEW OUT OF AFRICA



PICTURE PERFECT

Holding a private picturesque position on the banks of a tranquil river in South Africa's Sabi Sand Game Reserve is andBeyond's Tengile River Lodge. The nine luxurious guest suites each have their own lounge and dining area and feature an outdoor shower, plunge pool and private deck.



WILD MAGIC

Nyamatusi Camp and Nyamatusi Mahogany (designed especially for families) will offer one of the most awe inspiring adventures in Africa. Set in a remote area of Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park, these luxury African Bush Camps are due to open in April. Safari activities will centre on and around the mighty Zambezi River.



ABOVE TARANGIRE

Lemala Mpingo Ridge sits high on an escarpment with sweeping views of the valley below. The 15 spacious suites are decked out with private outdoor bathtubs and a sunken lounge – perfect for enjoying an afternoon siesta after game viewing. Tanzania's beautiful Tarangire National Park is renowned for its large herds of elephant and giant baobab trees.



ENDLESS PLAINS

The latest addition to Lemala's luxury collection is the contemporary Nanyukie Camp in Tanzania's eastern Serengeti (meaning 'endless plains' in the Masai tongue). The camp consists of large canvas cathedral-like tents and has a pool with views over the grasslands. The camp is open year-round offering game drives and walking safaris.

THE LAST ELEPHANTS

Inspired by the Great Elephant Census of 2016, which found a 30% loss in Elephant numbers in the last decade alone, this remarkable book features over 250 full colour photos, and offers profiles and preservation plans to combat the threats facing these incredible mammals. \$25 of each book sold will go directly to help fund conservation efforts. Purchase your copy today for \$66 inc GST ex postage.



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 search for us on the web and leave us a Google review. We may publish this information in our brochure or on our websites social media channels with your permission.



CONSERVATION UPDATE



As a specialist tour company creating bespoke journeys to Africa, Antarctic, the Arctic, Bhutan, Canada & Alaska, India and South America, African Wildlife Safaris and sister company Natural Focus are committed to preserving the world's flora and fauna. Over the years we have made significant contributions to conservation projects in the destinations we visit. Every client who books with us has the opportunity to make a small donation which we then match dollar for dollar. We do not charge an administration fee, so 100% of contributions go to the nominated project. In the second half of 2018 a total of US \$12,200 was donated to the following non-profit organisations:

Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund

For over half a century this foundation has not only been a leader in Gorilla conservation, but a blueprint for conservation programs worldwide. When Dr Dian Fossey first started the Karisoke Research Centre in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park there were only an estimated 250 mountain gorillas living in the Virunga Massif - this has increased to over 600. The gorilla fund is now replicating this proven technique in neighbouring Congo to help protect the critically endangered Grauer (eastern lowland) gorillas. Actively involved within the scientific research community, in 2018 the fund also supported over 40 field staff in pursuing undergraduate or advanced degrees.

One Horizon – soup kitchen

Four years ago, One Horizon took over management of a crèche outside one of Kenya's largest slums. Now it is a successful soup kitchen that feeds over 100 children aged between 3 and 7. Whilst the children are at the crèche, they are also provided with some clothing and taught English and other useful skills in a school environment. This work is imperative and aims to provide a brighter future for some of Kenya's poorest people.

Galapagos Conservancy

The tortoise breeding and rearing program aims to restore all tortoise populations to their historic numbers. The conservancy rears young tortoises in captivity to approximately 5 years of age before releasing them back into the wild.

Victoria Falls Anti-Poaching Unit

Since the unit's establishment in 1999 more than 360 hardened poachers have been arrested, and a staggering 18,800 wire snares have been removed from the 50sq km area the 12 full-time scouts patrol. The not-for-profit group spends a considerable time educating local communities and children about the benefits of conservation.



**YOUR CHANCE TO HELP
SAVE AFRICA'S WILDLIFE**

**JOIN US FOR A WILDLIFE
PHOTOGRAPHIC AUCTION**

MELBOURNE, THU 28 FEB, 6PM FOR 6:30PM

**DON'T FORGET YOUR CREDIT CARD!
SEE NEXT PAGE FOR FULL DETAILS**



Your personal invitation to support CO

This photographic competition presented by African Wildlife Safaris and the Angama Foundation has already raised US\$16,500 for six important conservation organisations working to preserve the Masai Mara ecosystem. Now we are hoping to raise more money with the sale of some of the award winning photographs.

These stunning, framed wildlife images are to be exhibited and available for purchase at special venues around the world, including Melbourne. All the images can be previewed on our website at aws.travel/photo-exhibition and any not sold on the night can be purchased directly through African Wildlife Safaris. Proceeds from the sale of all photographs will go directly to the particular charitable conservation project nominated by the Photographer.

The winning photograph -
"Escort" by Anup Shah.



ANGAMA
MARA



mara
elephant project



ANGAMA
FOUNDATION



CONSERVATION

PHOTOGRAPHIC AUCTION

African Wildlife Safaris would like to invite all our clients to a special exhibition of stunning wildlife photographs from Kenya's newest photographic competition, The Greatest Masai Mara photographer of the Year. The aim of the competition is to raise funds for conservation in Kenya's famed Masai Mara ecosystem.



— DATE —

Thursday 28 February 2019 - 6:00 for 6:30pm (RSVP required)

— VENUE —

Smart Artz Gallery
2 Alfred Place, South Melbourne

Drinks and canapés served throughout the evening

Live Auction of top 10 framed photographs by Auctioneer Peter Kennett from Kay & Burton

Up to 25 other photographs for sale, raffles and door prize

Please be generous! Every dollar you spend will help save Kenya's wildlife

Pre-viewing available

Wed 27 Feb 11:00am to 4:00pm and Thu 28 Feb from 2:00pm



RSVP: Numbers are strictly limited so please phone us to confirm your attendance. **(03) 9249 3777**

ATACAMA:

Miguel Purcell, the founder of Tierra Hotels, lived and worked in South America's San Pedro de Atacama in Chile. He fell in love with this high altitude desert region and bought a plot of land, with the dream of one day opening a hotel.

The inspiration for Tierra Atacama's design is the Licancabur Volcano - with everything in the hotel facing the volcano offering awe-inspiring views.

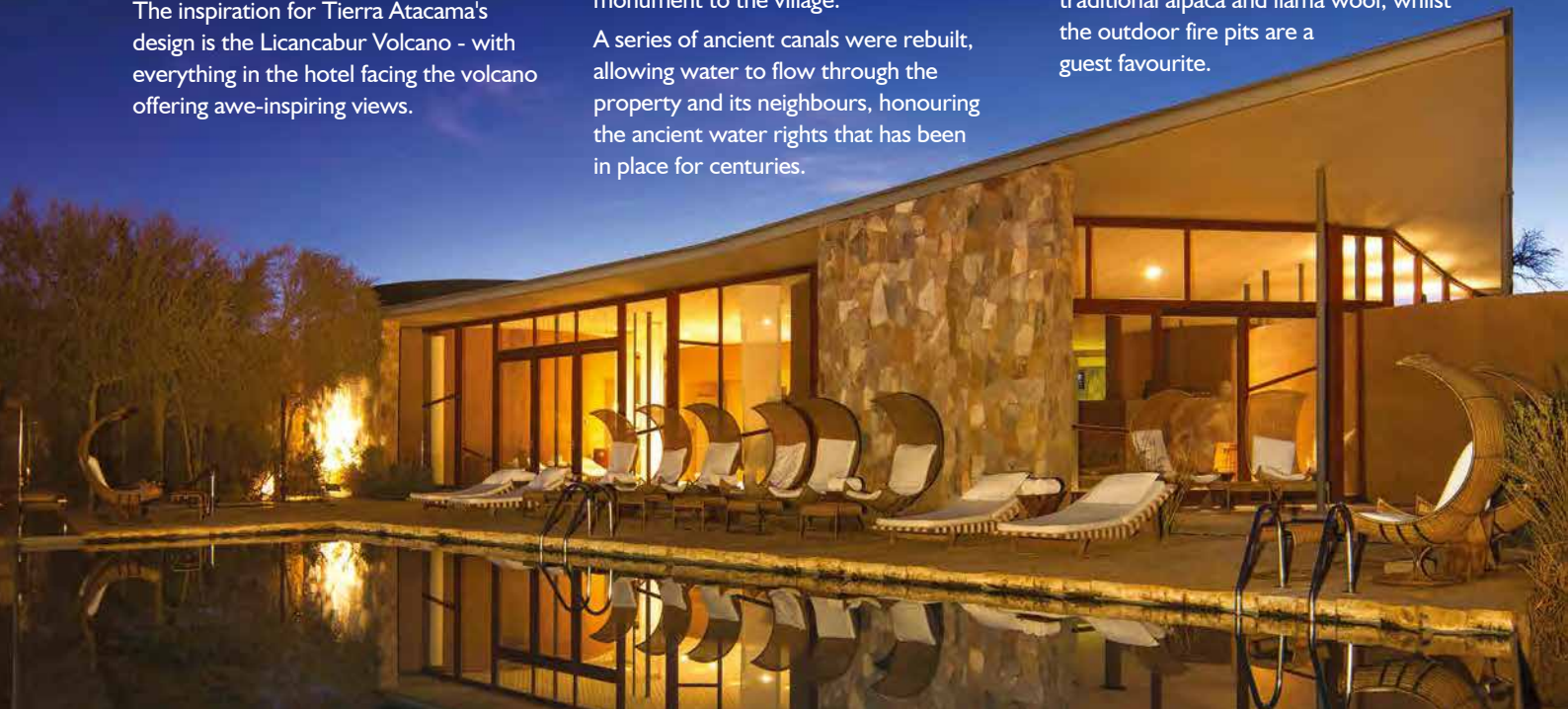
The authentic character of the area shines through the cutting edge architecture and is designed to incorporate the historical importance of the area.

The "Corral de Toros" is the entrance to the hotel - a space where cattle used to be kept after the difficult crossing of the Andes, which was preserved as a monument to the village.

A series of ancient canals were rebuilt, allowing water to flow through the property and its neighbours, honouring the ancient water rights that has been in place for centuries.

This system generates the water for the beautiful spa called "Uma" - the local Aymara Indian name for water - and for the garden where a variety of fruit and vegetables grow to be used in producing the hotels fine local cuisine.

The hotel is decorated with throws and textiles made by local weavers from traditional alpaca and llama wool, whilst the outdoor fire pits are a guest favourite.



TALES FROM TIERRA

PATAGONIA:

The site of the Tierra Patagonia Hotel was chosen for its sweeping views across the lake to the Torres del Paine National Park.

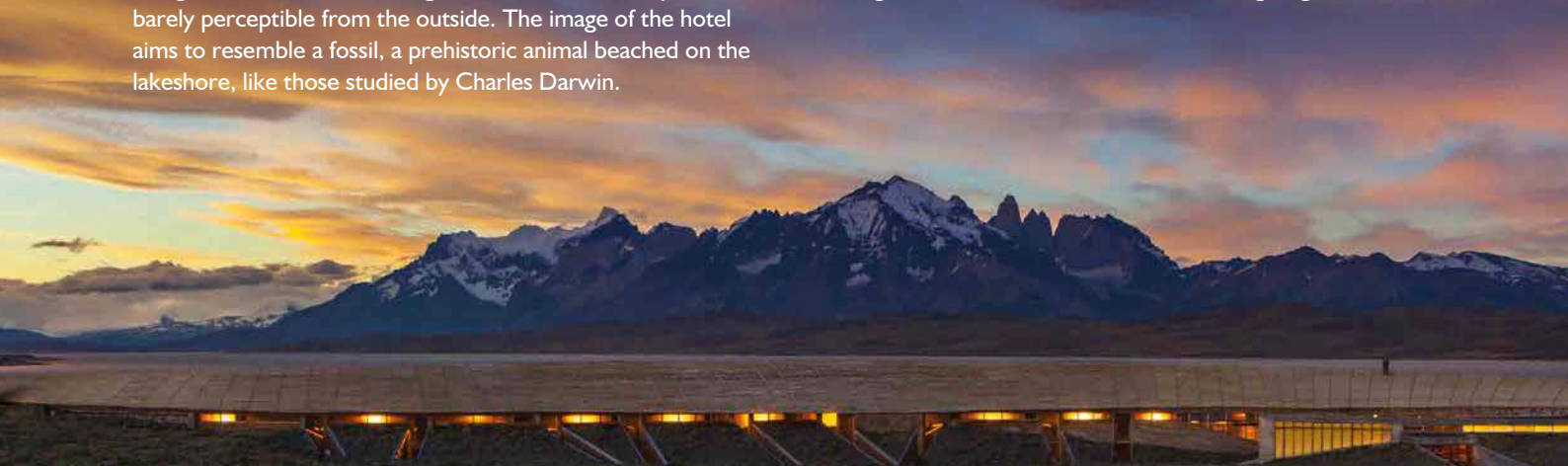
Born from the land, like a fold in the terrain caused by the strong Patagonian winds, the building melts into the landscape and is barely perceptible from the outside. The image of the hotel aims to resemble a fossil, a prehistoric animal beached on the lakeshore, like those studied by Charles Darwin.

A feeling of shelter and privacy comes from the interior division of space, a natural extension of the architecture which highlights the striking views of Torres de Paine from every corner of the hotel.

Pieces of driftwood, stones and fossils are scattered around the living area and can be found in the rooms giving a natural look.



tierrahotels
THE SPIRIT OF CHILE



CHILOÉ:

Tierra Chiloé is a warm and welcoming lodge sitting atop a hill overlooking the islands of the Chiloé Archipelago.

The futuristic architecture was inspired by the local houses on stilts, whilst the sustainable geometric design, clad in traditional wooden shingles offers an intimate and welcoming ambience.

A journey to Tierra Chiloé is as much about the island's rich and magical culture as it is about its landscapes.

Emphasis is placed on the outdoors, with daily kayak, bicycle, hiking and horseback excursions all on offer. Or experience Tierra's own private boat the "Williche" and travel to remote islands to visit historic churches which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Discover the authentic craft markets, warmth and traditions of the local people in the townships dotted throughout the archipelago.

To include a Tierra property in your itinerary call one of our South America specialists on 1300 363 302.



THE STORY OF HOW IT ALL BEGAN





A history of **IGUAZÚ** *Falls*

One of the planet's most awe-inspiring waterfalls, the Iguazú Falls (or Iguazu in Brazil) sit on the Argentinean/Brazilian border and are simply an astonishing sight to behold. Less than two hours flight from both Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, the falls have been historically important over the centuries and will continue to play a significant role into the future. Tourists flock to experience the thrills of white-water rafting and explore the thriving jungle whilst learning about the fascinating history of the area.

Legend of the Cataracts

According to Guaraní tradition the falls originated when a warrior named Caroba incurred the wrath of a forest god by escaping downriver in a canoe with a beautiful young girl, Naipí, whom the god desired. Infuriated the god caused the river to collapse creating the falls, over which Naipí fell and turned into a rock.

Tourism

Iguazú Falls attracts well over 1.3 million visitors every year, and the number of visitors is growing. There are countless hotels on offer but only two are located in the national parks surrounding Iguazú Falls - the recently reopened Gran Meliá Iguazú on the Argentinean side, and Belmond Hotel das Cataratas on the Brazilian side.

UNESCO History

Edmundo de Barros, a Brazilian army officer proposed Iguazú Falls become a national park back in 1897. Due to country boundaries, it wasn't until 1984 that this became a reality, and Iguazú National Park was created on the Argentinean side, and Iguazú National Park two years later. Within these parks the rainforest delta surrounding the falls is home to over 2,000 species of plants.

European history

The first European born explorer to view Iguazú Falls was the Spanish Conquistador Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca in 1541 after which one of the falls on the Argentinean side is named.



© Belmond Hotel das Cataratas



© Gran Meliá Iguazú

PANTANAL: SOUTH AMERICA'S WILDLIFE PARADISE



Recently returned from a trip to South America that included 7 nights in the remote Pantanal wetland, clients Geoff Putland and Tania Neill were left awe-struck by the wildlife they encountered. Having previously travelled to pristine environments such as Africa, Antarctic and the Arctic, searching for the elusive jaguar was at the top of their bucket list. Natural Focus recently interviewed Geoff about their experience:

NF: What was the highlight of your visit to the Pantanal?

GP: "The incredible variety of birdlife and wildlife was outstanding, and the guide we had was superb. The jaguar sightings were the highlight. We saw nine jaguar in five days, but the sheer diversity of wildlife was extraordinary".

NF: How did you see the jaguars?

GP: "Each excursion was by boat. The river safaris were spectacular. Apart from a few locals fishing on the river there was no one else around".

NF: And on one of these excursions you saw a mother with two cubs?

GP: "We found them on the riverbank, the mother swam across to an island in the middle of the river whilst the cubs followed. We had our own private guide, so it was just us. The whole experience was 30-40 minutes and absolutely sensational".

NF: How was your overall experience at the lodges?

GP: "The lodges are comfortable, but you're not going to be staying at the Four Seasons on the banks of the Paraguay River. You are going to these lodges for their remoteness and uniqueness. A highlight was horseback riding through areas not many people travel to at all".

For details please call one of our South America specialists on 1300 363 302.



DID YOU KNOW?

1 The Pantanal is the world's largest wetland covering **210,000 sq kilometres** and is home to the worlds:

Largest river
otters

Largest rodent
(the capybara)

Highest density
of jaguar

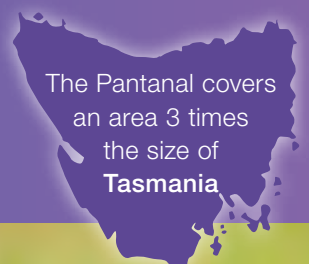
Largest parrot
(hyacinth macaw)



2 The Pantanal spreads
across **3 countries**
Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia



3 The Pantanal covers
an area 3 times
the size of
Tasmania



4 Has the largest concentration of reptiles
from the order **Crocodylia** in the world

LOS GLACIARES NATIONAL PARK



Natural Focus Marketing Manager Rolf Huber recently visited Argentina's breathtaking Los Glaciares National Park and raved about his experience.

South America is full of breathtaking and varied scenery, diverse wildlife and a myriad of cultures. However a definite highlight of my trip was a full day experience of Los Glaciares National Park and the Perito Moreno Glacier.

Setting sail from a private port 40 minutes from El Calafate aboard the Maria Turquesa - a luxury small vessel - I was treated to a day to remember. With only 20 people onboard in the Premium lounge it was a very intimate experience. The vessel itself was quiet and offered amazing views as we cruised through the picturesque waterways.

Naturalist guides provided insightful lectures throughout the day, with details about the three glaciers, Upsala, Spegazzini and Perito Moreno that we would visit during our tour.

The walking excursion along the shoreline through pristine forest was also a highlight, with stunning scenery and birdlife.

After enjoying a sumptuous three-course meal we finally set eyes upon Perito Moreno Glacier – and it didn't disappoint. The immensity of the glacier was just incredible.

This massive ice-field is created by the vast amount of snowfall that eventually compacts and freezes. We were able to see it from the boardwalk on the opposite shoreline, and from this angle we could see about three-quarters of the glacier. It is also unique as it's the only glacier in the world that is still advancing, and scientists don't know why.

One of the best aspects was that only one vessel could view each glacier at a time, so there was nothing to impede our view.

Talk to one of our South American experts on 1300 363 302.



THE GALAPAGOS SHEER WONDER



Natasha Redondo, one of our senior South America experts, recently experienced an awe-inspiring cruise exploring the wonders of the Galapagos Islands.

"As one of the most famous destinations in the world, renowned for its incredible diversity of wildlife including iguanas, flightless cormorants and blue footed boobies, the Galapagos Islands had been on my bucket list for a long time.

From the moment I landed in Baltra it was surreal. I stepped aboard the Santa Cruz II and the feeling that I was on a trip of a lifetime was reinforced.

It was a joy sailing through the pristine waters searching for seals and turtles, and a privilege to set foot on the islands made famous by Charles Darwin.

One memorable landing was at Punta Espinosa on Fernandina Island where literally hundreds of marine iguanas can be found soaking up the sun to warm themselves. The vast number of individuals meant you had to watch every step you took in case you stood on one!

The action didn't stop there, at night there were plenty of activities organised onboard by the staff. One night we made our own cocktails, whilst another night we had a salsa party on deck.

However nothing will compare to snorkelling with sea lions and sea turtles. I was floating on the surface watching the sea floor when a turtle popped up right in front of my face!

It was a feeling of sheer wonder and excitement I will remember for the rest of my life."

Call one of our South America experts today on 1300 363 302.



PATAGONIA'S THE SECRET



At the very bottom of South America is beautiful **Torres del Paine National Park, one of Chile's most iconic adventure hotspots.**

The park is renowned for its rugged rock pinnacles, calving glaciers and alpine forests, but within this picturesque setting roams the world's largest mountain lion – the puma.

The Torres del Paine is thought to be home to the highest concentration of the species than anywhere else on the planet. Like their African relatives, the best time to see these cats, nicknamed "The Ghosts of the Andes" is when they are most active during early mornings and late afternoons.

Daily puma tracking excursions follow this schedule, in the wilderness everything runs on nature's clock.

Traverse this breathtaking landscape either by 4WD or on foot with a professional tracking team in search of this impressive, yet elusive cat – an experience that will rival any Big-Cat Safari around the world.

Combining adventure and comfort, return each day to a warm fire and home-cooked meal in your chosen accommodation. Options include five-star Explora Camp, authentic Hotel Las Torres or the welcoming Hosteria Pehoe, located on the shores of the turquoise lake for which it is named.

Though the warmer months of October to February are the most popular time to visit Patagonia, the best time to search for pumas in the park is May to August – the 'secret season' – making Patagonia a year-round destination.



PUMAS

SEASON



Apart from fewer tourists, it is during this time that their main prey, the guanaco (pictured above right), concentrate in specific areas of the park attracting the local puma population.

Tracking requires patience, dedication and silence to hear or see signs of pumas. But it is often the guanaco, a relative of the Andean llama that alerts trackers to a puma sighting with their alarm call.

The park is home to a myriad of other animal species, including owls, eagles and black swans. Puma trekking, hiking, kayaking, fly fishing and horseback riding are just a handful of the options available in this magnificent part of the world.

For more information on Puma tracking or another South American destination please call us on 1300 363 302.



PUMA TRACKING

6 days/5 nights

Departs ex Punta Arenas

Prices from \$9787 per person twin share

Spend four full days searching for the elusive puma on this private tailored trip in breathtaking Torres Del Paine. Enjoy twice daily excursions either on foot or by 4WD before returning each night to comfortable lodge accommodation. Guided hiking is included and other activities such as kayaking and horse riding are at extra cost.

EGYPT



REDISCOVERED

They have a saying in Egypt – 'If you ever drink from the Nile, you will always come back.' After a number of years of instability within the country this saying is proving to be true.

Travellers are starting to return once more to this fascinating North African oasis in ever increasing numbers. With the potential to be the hottest destination of 2019, Egypt has a plethora of tours on offer from the historic pyramids to a luxury Nile cruise.

Home to the legendary pharaohs of old and scattered with over 1500 ancient temples and other magnificent sights, the country evokes a remarkable living history.

There is no better way to experience Egypt than on a luxury cruise down the Nile River. Our 9 day Legends of the Nile itinerary explores all the very best sights Egypt has to offer. Between Luxor and Aswan, visit the magnificent temples of Karnak, Edfu and Luxor, and discover the ancient crypts of Seti I and Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings.

Visit the island temple of Philae and learn about the 'Unfinished Obelisk' in Aswan's North Quarry, whilst Cairo's best museums bring to life centuries of ancient Egyptian history – including the renowned mummy room.

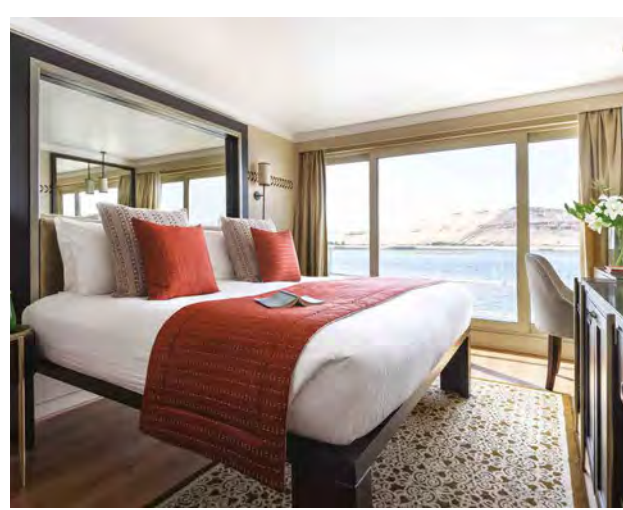
Across the Red Sea, Oman and Jordan offer plenty of cultural and historic options with a different flavour. Occupied by the Portuguese during the 16th century the fascinating city of Muscat is a wonder, whilst Jordan is home to one of the Seven Wonders of the World – the city of Petra.

Call our Destination Specialists on 1300 363 302.



Meet the expert: **HANY ELKATOURI**

Our resident specialist, Hany studied Egyptology at the University of Cairo before going on to lead tours across the length and breadth of Egypt. Growing up in Giza, Hany spent his childhood years marvelling at the pyramids. His favourite place to visit is the Valley of the Kings, and he loves the colours, decorations and stories that are inscribed within the tombs.



TREASURE ON THE NILE

There is nothing quite like a luxury Nile cruise to discover the awe-inspiring sites of ancient Egypt.

The Nile has been the centre of life within Egypt for millennia, and with the effective re-birth of the country in the last few months, a number of new and refurbished ships are moored along its shores once more.

Sanctuary Retreats, renowned for their beautiful lodges and camps across Africa, is one operator sailing down the world's longest river. Their recently renovated Sunboat IV accommodates just 80 guests in stunning art deco, air-conditioned cabins all with Nile views.

This five-star vessel is equipped with two spacious lounges, bar, dining area and beautiful rooftop sundeck with a pool.

Relax and enjoy all Egypt has to offer as you journey down the Nile - the life blood of this once great empire - between Aswan and Luxor.

Witness the power of the Egyptian civilisation and learn about the many different gods they worshipped. Explore the magical temple of Edfu – one of Egypt's most well preserved monuments – and visit the temple of Kom Ombo, dedicated to the crocodile God Sobek.

Along with the Sunboat IV Sanctuary Retreats have three other vessels available for 3, 4 and 7 night itineraries.

For more details on a luxury Nile cruise call one of our Destination Specialists on 1300 363 302.



SANCTUARY
RETREATS



RWANDA'S HIDDEN GEMS

M O U N T A I N G O R I L L A S

One of our senior Africa specialists, Michael Fitzgerald, recently returned from a trip of a lifetime. For Michael there were two major highlights – searching for the legendary mountain gorillas in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park, and experiencing the remote Selous Game Reserve in southern Tanzania.

"Searching for Africa's fabled mountain gorillas is an incredibly exhilarating and unique experience. As I rose for the day's adventure, there was an air of excitement amongst the group.

It was an early start to reach the park headquarters for our 7am briefing. Once everybody had been allocated a gorilla family, we

all climbed into the vehicles and set off to our respective starting points. To find these magnificent primates we had to trek uphill through lush jungle terrain. It was challenging at times, but for me this made the whole experience more rewarding.

When I finally glimpsed them through the forest, my heart was racing at a 1000 miles an hour, and I could feel the adrenaline rush through me. Sitting down watching them just playing together and foraging was so surreal.

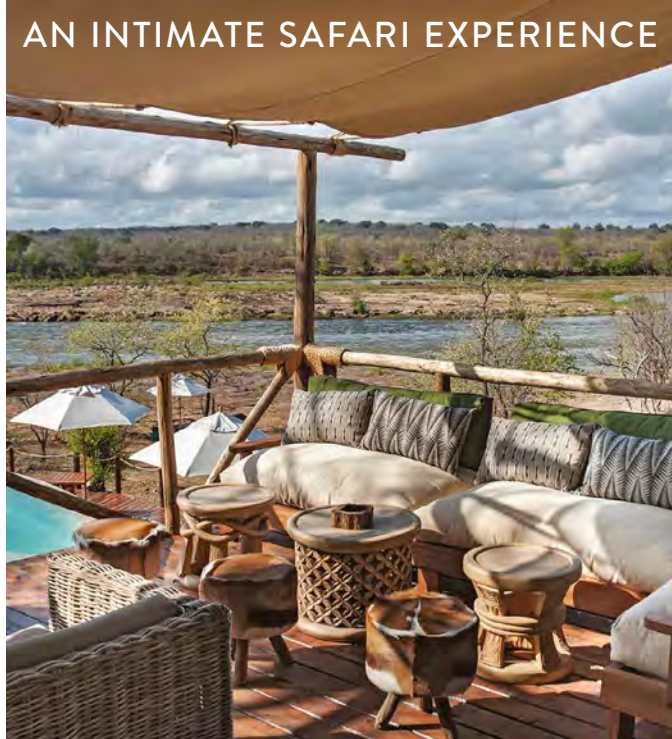
The beauty is they pay you little mind, but if you're lucky the more curious individuals will often come and sit next to you as if you were part of the family. It was an experience I will never forget."





SELOUS GAME RESERVE

AN INTIMATE SAFARI EXPERIENCE



Only a short flight from Tanzania's capital Dar Es Salaam is the Selous Game Reserve, one of Africa's largest protected wilderness areas. Over three days game-viewing Michael saw no one except the lodge vehicles. It was a completely intimate experience.

"Set on the banks of the Ruaha River, Azura Selous Lodge provided a peaceful setting to return to after the day's activities. The staff went that extra mile to make sure our stay was as memorable as possible, whilst our guides Joseph and Nenga were truly fantastic – their passion and energy for the wildlife was intoxicating.

There was a beautiful calmness about the area, and it reminded me a little bit of Zambia – untouched and unspoilt. The Rufiji River and its extensive network of tributaries are the life line of the reserve. During the dry season (Jun-Nov) there are excellent game viewing opportunities as animals congregate to these water sources.

Large herds of elephant and buffalo are frequently encountered, with elephant regularly visiting the camp. A highlight was seeing a pack of wild dogs playing and interacting together in a dry river bed.

Fishing on the tranquil banks of the river at dusk whilst watching a magical African sunset was an incredible way to end our stay."

For further information on the Selous or gorilla trekking chat to Michael on 1300 363 302.



A LIFETIME OF SAFARIS

Our longtime partner in East Africa, **Origins Safaris**, has been operating authentic African experiences since 1963. Founded by renowned ornithologist **Don Turner** and his wife **Margaret**, their son **Steve Turner** is now at the helm, along with his two children **Rebecca** and **Richard**.

If you are looking for a top of the range wildlife or cultural safari with some of East Africa's best guides, we highly recommend their classic safaris in Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda.

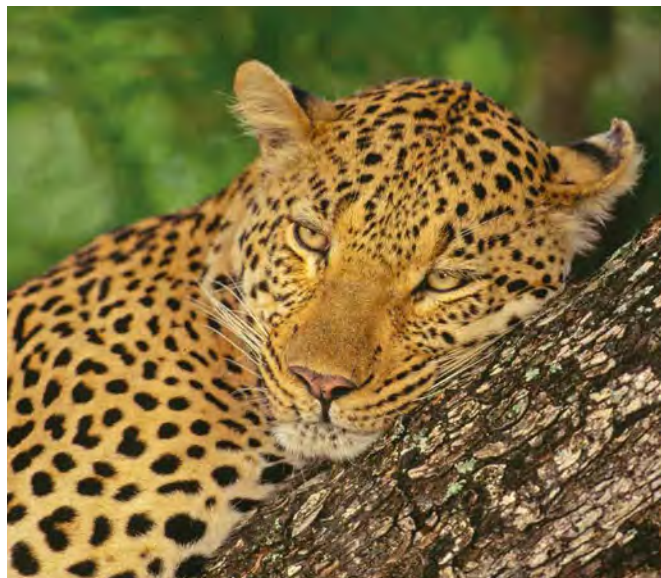
For a unique and exhilarating African adventure to places that few people ever get the chance to visit, Origins also offer bespoke safaris which explore exotic destinations like Ethiopia, Angola, Benin, Sudan, and little known Chad. These journeys concentrate on wildlife, disappearing cultures, history or archaeology, and are accompanied by expert guides or even Steve himself. Be transported by light aircraft or helicopter into distant mountains, far flung wildlife reserves or remote communities where few travellers ever go.

You can journey through time in Ethiopia and Sudan, starting with the tomb of the Black Pharaohs of Nubia, some 2000 years BC, and follow the trade and spiritual routes of Animism, Orthodox Christianity and Islam across the Horn of Africa.

Be one of the first to explore the rich cultures of Angola, or travel to Benin in West Africa to learn about Voodoo, one of the least understood religions of the world.

For true adventures and experiences you will never forget, call one of our Destination Specialists to learn more about Origins' unique journeys.





LOVING LEOPARDS

Our Reservations Manager Kate Witton recently visited the Sabi Sands Game Reserve bordering South Africa's Kruger Park and had some close encounters with this once elusive predator.

"At one time seeing a leopard in the wild was a rare experience, but thanks to conservation efforts and habituation, sightings in some areas are common. The Sabi Sands has one of the highest densities of these big cats in the world and on my recent trip I lost count of how many of these gorgeous cats we saw.

One wonderful afternoon was spent with a mother and her two adorable cubs. The young male was stalking and pouncing on his mother, honing his hunting technique, whilst the young female cub was perched in a tree gnawing on a kill.

Another morning we came across a rather brazen male leopard resting alongside the track. We pulled up right next to him and he looked at me with those big amber eyes and let out a low growl. He then proceeded to let us know this was his territory by rubbing against nearby trees, even standing on his hind legs to reach a little higher and make his mark.

Most of the leopards we encountered were so relaxed around the vehicles that even when mating (a rare sight to see) they weren't bothered by the clicking of our cameras.

Mating is a noisy affair and the female, despite being a fraction of her partner's size, makes all the moves and calls the shots.

I look forward to news of the new cubs being spotted (pun intended) soon."



TRAVEL WITH A PURPOSE IN 2019

Get up-close to some of Africa's iconic animals and the conservation projects that help to protect them on these 8 life-changing journeys.

These unique trips provide the chance to get involved, give back and make a difference. They offer luxury with a purpose, with each journey led by expert guides, and privileged access to unique behind-the-scenes conservation and community projects. Accommodation is in very comfortable, eco-sensitive safari camps and lodges.

All proceeds from these journeys will be channeled back to the conservation and community projects and partners that you'll be visiting.

On The Great Apes and Rainforests journey in Rwanda you will meet mountain gorillas and chimpanzees, whilst staying at the unique Bisate Lodge. Accompanied by rhino conservation experts in Namibia, track the critically endangered desert-adapted black rhino, on the exhilarating Black Rhino Tracking in the Namib adventure.

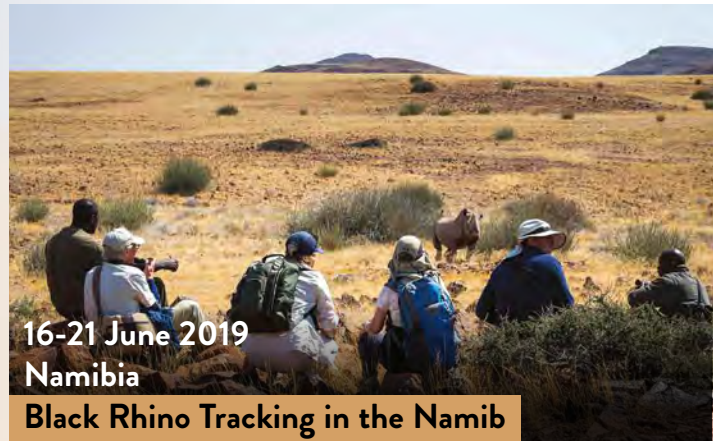
Or choose Paradise with a Purpose on the idyllic North Island of the Seychelles, where you'll actively participate in a survey and banding of a vulnerable bird species, the Seychelles White-eye, and meet terrapins and the Aldabra giant tortoise.

Join a 'Children in the Wilderness' annual camp program where participants are introduced to their natural heritage, learn life skills, environmental education, team building, art and games.

For these and other Journeys with a Purpose see next page or call our Destination Specialists for full details and prices.



“There is a purpose that drives everything we do – a shared passion and love for the natural world and wildlife, and an urgent need to conserve some of the most remote and pristine places on Earth.”



ESCORTED SMALL GROUP JOURNEY

"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 Tirath 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

"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

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.



TAJ, TEMPLES & TIGERS

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.



Departing Monday 03 Feb 2020

We invite you to join us on this escorted group tour, exploring many of India's best historical sites and national parks in search of the majestic Royal Bengal tiger. The main focus of this itinerary is to see these beautiful cats in their natural habitat – a privilege few people will experience. Nothing can prepare you for the excitement of seeing tigers in the wild, and it is an experience that will rival any African Safari. There is plenty of time to see many of India's historical sites, and indulge in the flavours and history of this diverse country. Contemplate the mysteries of ancient temples, grand palaces and gaze upon the incredible architecture and beauty of the Taj Mahal.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Total of 13 guided tiger safaris in Bandhavgarh, Kanha and Ranthambore
- Sunrise and sunset visit to the breathtakingly beautiful Taj Mahal
- City tours of India's treasures including Delhi, Jaipur and Agra
- Visit the ancient city of Fatehpur Sikri and the Bharatpur avian paradise
- Accompanying naturalist and Australian escort

TOUR COST

EX MEL	EX SYD	EX BNE	EX ADL	EX PER
\$12,791	\$12,807	\$12,811	\$12,794	\$12,639
per person twin share	per person twin share	per person twin share	per person twin share	per person twin share

Single Supplement: \$2870.

We can try to arrange shared accommodation on request.

*International airfares strictly subject to availability.

**For further information and to reserve your place
please call Anne-Marie on 1300 363 302.**

THE DILMAH

Conceived in 1988 by Merrill Fernando, Dilmah Tea (named after Merrill's two sons Dilhan and Malik) is now renowned as the finest Ceylon tea in the world. Merrill's long standing ethos, 'business as a matter of human service', sees the company pick, perfect and package its product at the source, providing much needed assistance to many Sri Lankan families.

After receiving worldwide attention, Merrill and his sons began running tea tours for tourists, and opened their first hotel, Ceylon Tea Trails in 2005 on a hillside overlooking the tea plantations below.

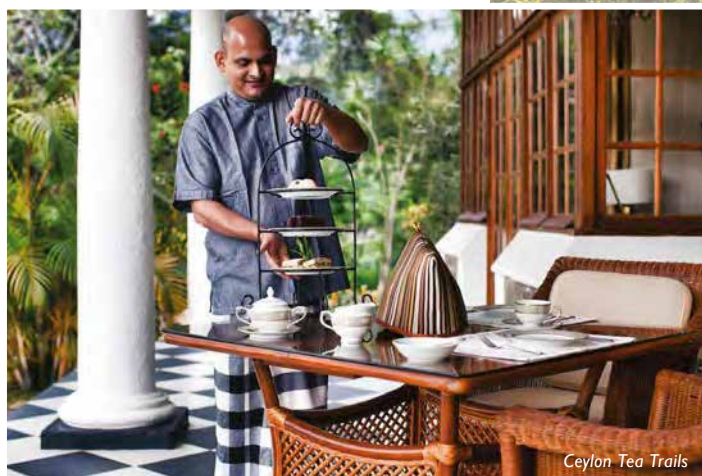
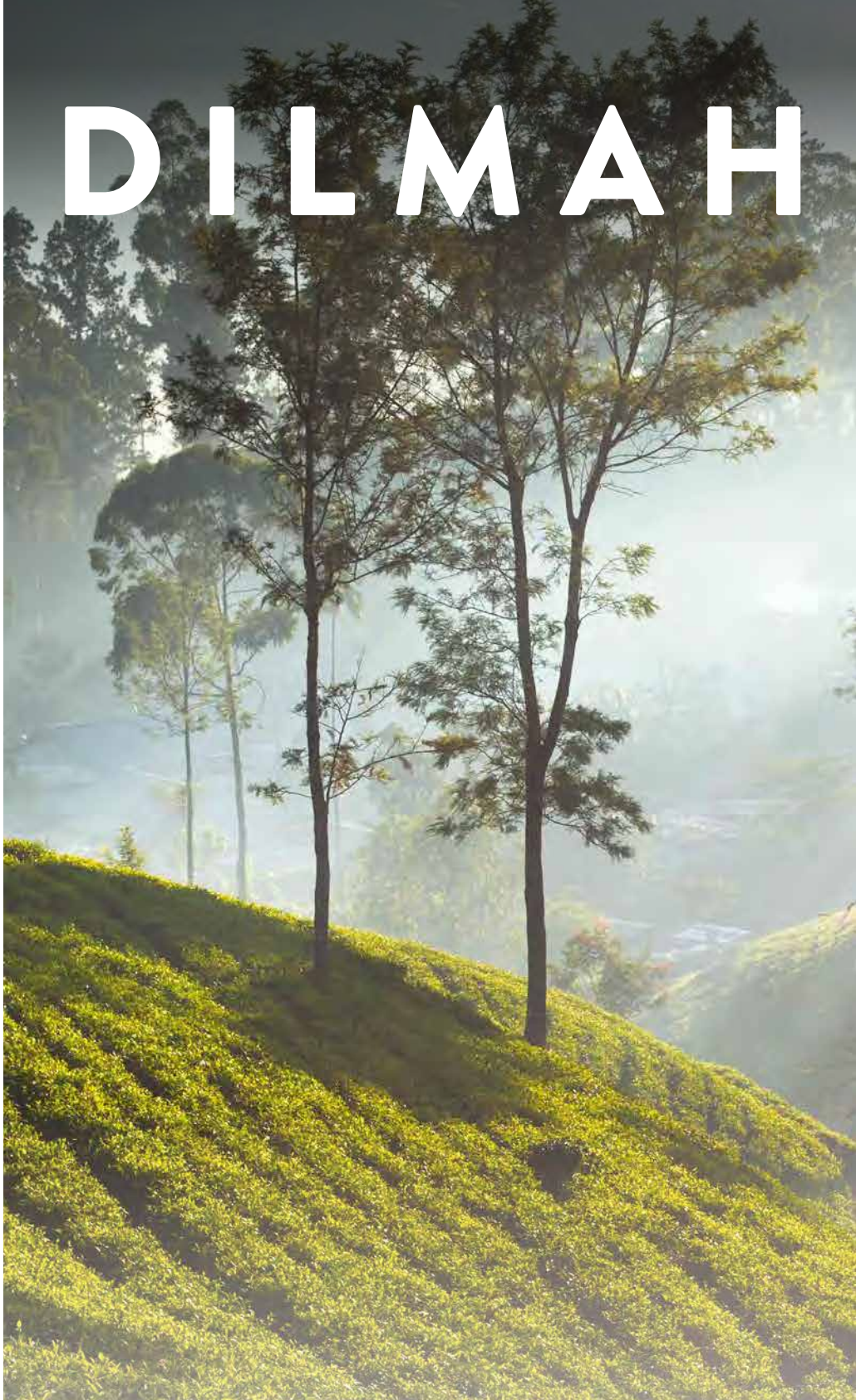
From this sprang a new hotel chain, Resplendent Ceylon. Their collection of three small, luxury resorts offer the discerning traveller a unique insight into the history, culture and wilderness of Sri Lanka – while still contributing towards local communities & the environment through the MJF Foundation & Dilmah Conservation.

The "Best of Sri Lanka" circuit, created by the family-owned Dilmah Tea Company, features distinctively original resorts, connected by a thread of peerless service.

Wild Coast Tented Lodge, sitting on a secluded beach on the edge of Yala National Park offers an authentic safari experience with all the luxuries one can expect from a Resplendent Ceylon property.

Cape Weligama, the last of these exquisite hotels is the most sumptuous, inhabiting 12 acres of pristine tropical wilderness.

All three resorts have won global acclaim and are the sole Sri Lankan members of the esteemed Relais & Chateau collection.

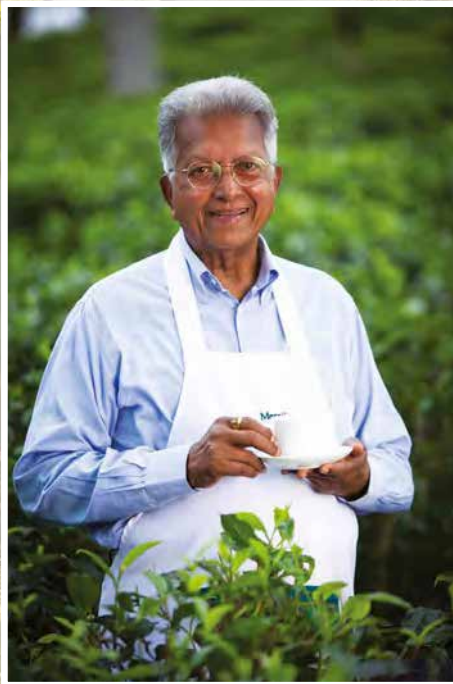


Ceylon Tea Trails

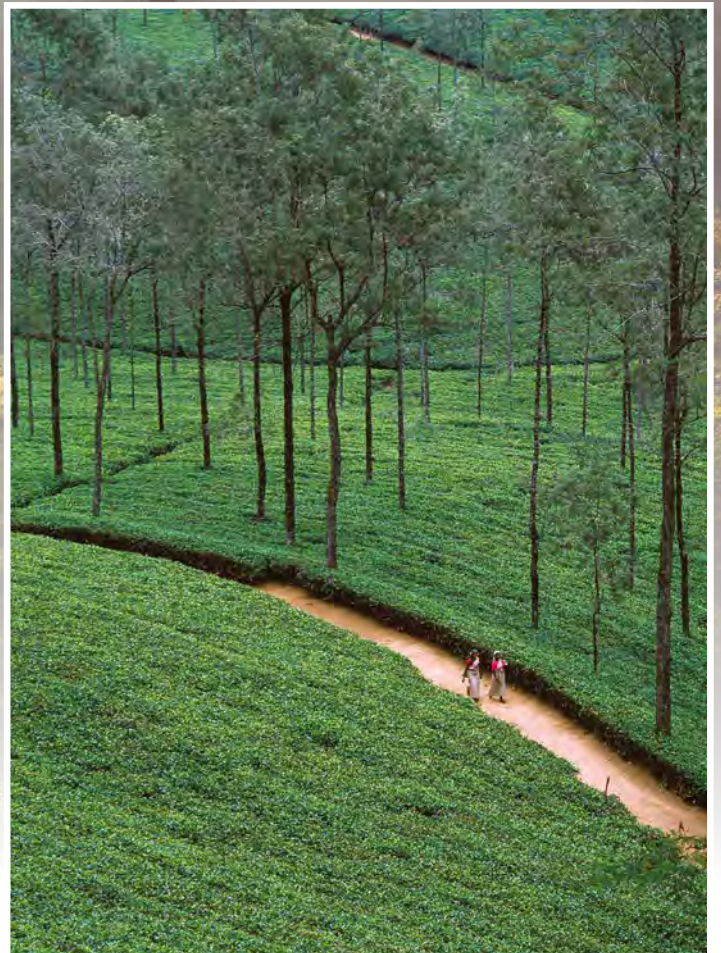


Wild Coast Tented Lodge

EXPERIENCE



Cape Weligama



FOUR ARCTIC ISLANDS

Just over 120 lucky travellers will have the chance to get a taste of the Arctic on this one-off voyage in 2020 to four Arctic Islands - Spitsbergen, Jan Mayen, Greenland and Iceland.

This exciting 18 day ocean journey with Quark Expeditions is ideal for first time visitors who want a taste of everything the Arctic has to offer: ethereal icebergs, stunning landscapes, traditional Inuit culture and wildlife like polar bears and walrus.

Wing your way from Norway to Spitzbergen where you board your polar vessel, the newly renovated Ocean Adventurer. Spitzbergen is renowned for its spectacular glaciers, fjords and abundant wildlife. Then cruise to mysterious Jan Mayen, an island so remote few people have ever explored it before. Reaching Greenland's east coast traverse the beautiful fjord system of Scoresbysund, renowned for its massive icebergs, and look out for musk oxen and nesting seabirds on the cliff tops.

There will be ample opportunity to delve into the history of the region, meeting local communities and visiting ancient settlements; cruise the coastline and inlets by zodiac in search of wildlife, or enjoy optional paddling or kayak adventures.

Quark Expeditions® has the largest polar-class fleet of any polar operator. Their ships are built for the challenging polar environments, so they confidently take you to places ordinary cruise companies wouldn't dream of going.

For more information and prices please call our Polar Specialists on 1300 363 302.

DEPARTURE DATE 2020

From Oslo 13-30 Aug

Prices from: USD14,495 per person (twin lower deck)



CROSSING THE CIRCLE



 **Quark Expeditions®**
The Leader in Polar Adventures



Venture beyond the Antarctic Circle where few travellers have ever been, on Quark's 14 Day Crossing the Circle Southern Expedition.

This exciting, in-depth exploration of the Antarctic Peninsula visits penguin colonies, giant glaciers, hidden bays and historical sites, but you'll also navigate further - to 66.5° south - and the splendid isolation beyond the Antarctic Circle.

Personalise your adventure with activities that suit your interests, choosing from included options such as zodiac cruising, shore excursions, hiking, lectures with guides and on-board experts, photography and even taking the Polar Plunge - a popular rite of passage! Additional paid activities include sea kayaking, easy paddling on a sit-on-top kayak, stand-up paddle boarding, and overnight camping on shore.

Quark has highly experienced expedition leaders and a high staff to guest ratio.

For this expedition you will sail on the 189 passenger Ocean Diamond, for journeys departing from Ushuaia (Argentina), or the 199 passenger Ocean Endeavour, for journeys starting in Buenos Aires (includes BA group hotel and group flight to Ushuaia).

The Ocean Endeavour offers more adventure options, including mountaineering and cross country skiing, although all activities are weather dependent.

For a memorable, personalised journey to earth's 7th continent, call one of our experienced Polar Specialists on 1300 363 302.

DEPARTURE DATES 2020

From Ushuaia 8-21 Jan, 16-29 Feb

From Buenos Aires 16-29 Jan

Prices from: USD13095 per person (twin porthole)



JOURNEY THE WORLD

WITH UNCruise

Wildlife only seen in pictures? It's there for you to discover on an UnCruise. What makes these magnificent small vessel cruises so special, and unlike many other cruise ships around the world, is that when bears are seen along the shoreline or you spot breaching whales or spinning dolphins, your captain lingers.

Join one of the many daily excursions, or relax during the morning onboard; your itinerary is flexible. Days are spent in the wild snorkelling with sea turtles, kayaking through mangroves or near glaciers, and hiking deserts or lush forests accompanied by naturalist guides.

Small ships are easy going with time to visit the bridge, unwind in the hot tub, or share stories with new travel mates over cocktails and card games.

Journey the world and experience Alaska's glaciers and wildlife or traverse the Pacific Northwest's old growth forests. Sample the local fare on a wine and culinary cruise or discover waterfalls, canyons and adventure down the Columbia and Snake Rivers in Washington State.

Marvel at the "world's aquarium" in Mexico's Sea of Cortés or try night snorkelling in Hawaii with giant pacific manta ray. Transit the Panamá Canal and share Costa Rica's jungle with scarlet macaws, whilst Darwin's giant tortoises await you in the Galápagos.

UnCruise also offer a number of family oriented cruises. In 2019 there are two select departures exploring the magic of Alaska's glacier country departing Jul 5 and Aug 9.

For further information on small vessel cruises call one of our Destination Specialists today on 1300 363 302.




UnCruise
ADVENTURES
since 1996



DESTINATION CANADA

For awe-inspiring adventure travellers need look no further than Canada.

This panoramic country is covered with stunning snow-capped mountain ranges, pristine forests, shimmering lakes, incredible coastal inlets and magical arctic wilderness.

The beautiful towns of Lake Louise, Banff and Jasper are a favourite amongst travellers. And why not? The Canadian Rockies are a year round destination, offering excellent summer and winter activities amid breathtaking beauty, whilst the famous Rocky Mountaineer train offers door to door service from Vancouver.

British Columbia's picturesque coastline is renowned for phenomenal whale watching and grizzly bear viewing.

These bears are accustomed to tourists, and go about their daily business without a care, making for spectacular viewing.

During mid-August to October the bears gather to fish for salmon within the many rivers and streams. There is no lack of awe-inspiring animal sightings in Canada.

Churchill, a small town on the shores of Hudson Bay in Manitoba, plays host to phenomenal polar bear viewing during the months of October and November.

The world's natural light show, the Aurora Borealis is a marvel to behold. Canada is one of the best places to witness this magical event, year round, but particularly during the winter months (Nov-Apr). Whitehorse in the Yukon is no exception.



TRULY WILD

THE GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST

Canada's British Columbia (BC) is home to almost 25% of the world's temperate rainforest. This beautiful environment covers a vast area of coastline rich in flora and fauna. The Great Bear Rainforest is home to exceptional grizzly bear viewing – but there is more to this untamed wilderness than just bears!

Temperate forests decompose slowly, resulting in a rich base of vegetation. Within MacMillan Provincial Park on Vancouver Island is an ancient forest of Douglas fir trees up to 800 years old. The mystical forest in Haida Gwaii National Park is completely covered in a mass of moss – creating a unique landscape.

The intricate system of islands and inlets is swimming with humpback, gray and minke whales whilst dolphins, seals and sea lions can also be spotted. It is here you can find some of the best orca whale viewing in the world.

On the coastline find pristine forests, sandy beaches and the 75km West Coast Trail – a spectacular multi-day hike.

There are countless walking trails throughout the area and the historic town of Tofino is a popular destination for adventurers.

BC isn't without its own distinctive history and culture. The beautifully carved memorial poles of the Haida people illustrate their relationship with the land and sea. Recently archaeologists unearthed an ancient settlement, along with 29 footprints, confirmed as the earliest known of their kind on the continent – thought to be 13,000 years old.

The Great Bear Rainforest has been documented on film and will be released as an IMAX movie worldwide on 15 February 2019. It took filmmakers 3 years to capture the spirit of this wild place.

Natural Focus has a range of excellent bear viewing lodges available within or on the border of The Great Bear Rainforest. These include Knight Inlet Lodge, Sonora Resort, Farewell Harbour Lodge, Great Bear Lodge and Spirit Bear Lodge.

Contact one of our Canada specialists on 1300 363 302 for further information.

FRONT ROW SEATS TO THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Right at the top of many travellers' bucket-list is the astounding natural light show of the Aurora Borealis. The mysterious green, yellow and red lights that dance across the night sky take centre-stage in northern Canada from November to April. Well within the 'aurora circle' (the region where auroras appear most frequently) there are few city lights to impede your view of this unique spectacle.

There are a number of quintessential lodges that provide front row seats to this natural marvel. Relax in an outdoor spa or huddle together and sip hot chocolate with unobscured views of the picturesque night sky.

Northern Lights Resort & Spa is one of the best places to witness the Aurora Borealis. Only a short drive from Whitehorse in Yukon, its peaceful setting amid beautiful forests will leave you in awe.

Blachford Lake Lodge in the Northwest Territory delivers an even more exclusive experience. Located on the shores of Blachford Lake, the lodge is a 25-minute float-plane flight from Yellowknife. Though remote, this lodge does not lack for comfort, with hot tubs, sauna and plenty of other modern amenities on hand.

During the day both lodges offer a wide array of activities including snowshoeing, ice-fishing, snowmobiling and guided hikes exploring the beautiful hills and forests.

To experience Yukon's northern lights contact one of our Canada specialists on 1300 363 302.



© Northern Lights Resort & Spa



© Blachford Lake Lodge

CHURCHILL

RECONNECTED

Located on the shore of Hudson Bay lies the remote town of Churchill. In recent times it was only accessible by plane, due to severe flood damage in May 2017 to the one train line that links the township to the rest of Canada.

Built in 1926 the railway has played a major role in developing northern Canada, chiefly in the exportation of wheat.

But now VIA Rail's two-night service from Winnipeg has resumed, much to the relief of Churchill locals and businesses – for which this rail link remains an important life-line.

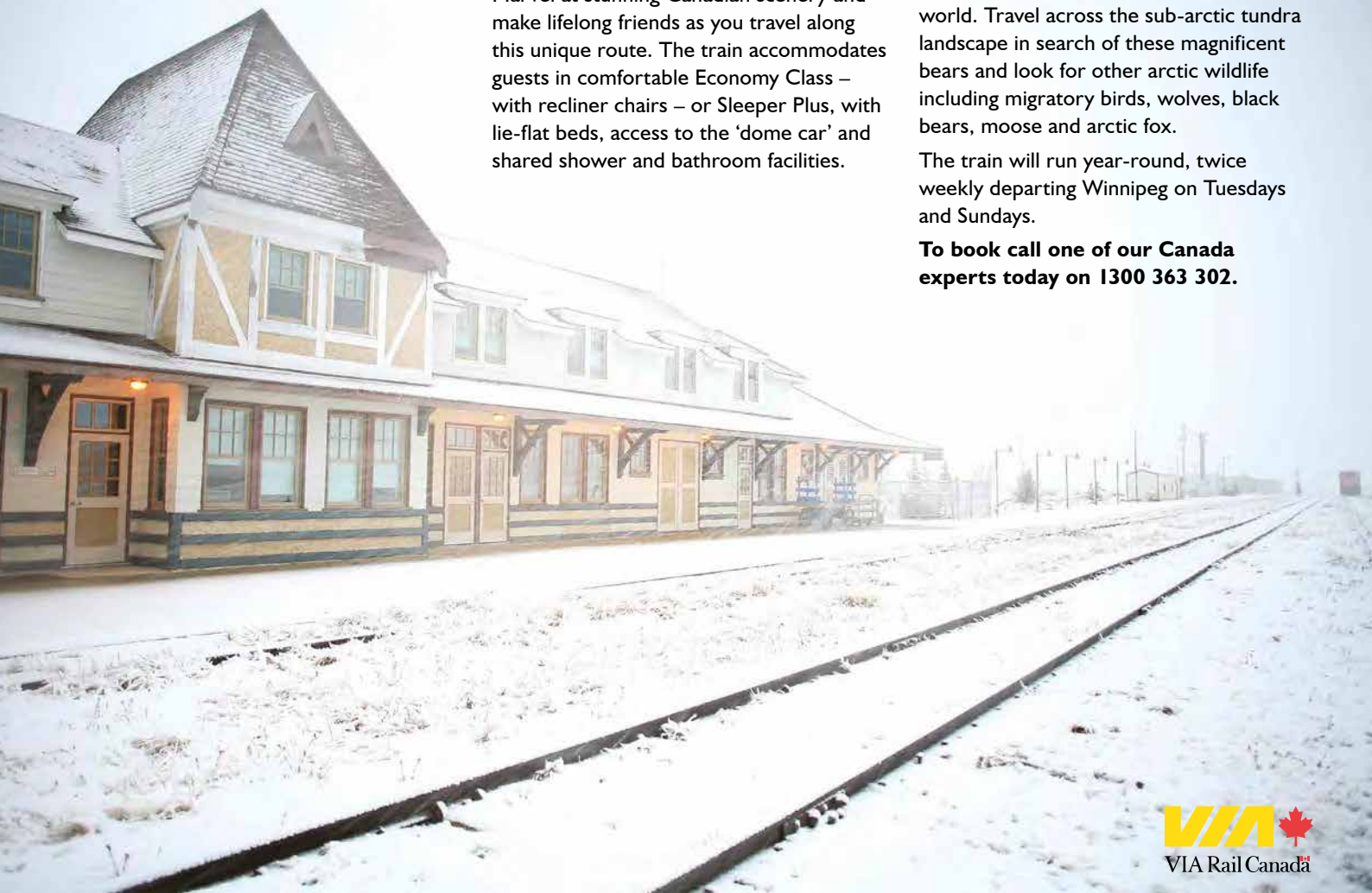
Marvel at stunning Canadian scenery and make lifelong friends as you travel along this unique route. The train accommodates guests in comfortable Economy Class – with recliner chairs – or Sleeper Plus, with lie-flat beds, access to the 'dome car' and shared shower and bathroom facilities.

In the summer months (July to October) VIA Rail's glass-domed observation car (pictured below) gives passengers unrivalled views of tundra scenery and magical night skies.

Often referred to as "The polar bear capital of the world" during October and November this tiny town offers visitors some of the best polar bear viewing in the world. Travel across the sub-arctic tundra landscape in search of these magnificent bears and look for other arctic wildlife including migratory birds, wolves, black bears, moose and arctic fox.

The train will run year-round, twice weekly departing Winnipeg on Tuesdays and Sundays.

To book call one of our Canada experts today on 1300 363 302.





Manitoba
CANADA'S HEART  BEATS

POLAR BEAR MIGRATION

— Fly in Photo Safari —

Observe polar bears close up on this unique journey into the remote Arctic tundra. Take short walks with seasoned Inuit guides for amazing bear viewing and photography. Aimed at photographers and keen amateurs this journey of a lifetime offers breathtaking landscapes, remarkable wildlife encounters and the chance to witness the magical Northern Lights.

From Churchill on the shores of Canada's Hudson Bay you will wing your way on a 50 minute flight to a base camp on the frozen tundra, strategically located in "polar bear alley". At the Nanuk Polar Bear Lodge you can expect to see from one to ten polar bears per day, as well as other wildlife like Arctic hares, foxes, martens, and snowy owls.

Guided excursions are led by expedition leaders and Inuit guides, who provide an engaging insight into their culture. Having lived harmoniously with the wildlife in this stark environment for centuries their knowledge of polar bear behaviour is unrivalled, and provide an authentic and intimate polar bear experience.

The lodge is surrounded by an electric fence, providing unobtrusive, safe polar bear viewing on foot. Each of the 8 cabins have an ensuite bath and hot shower, whilst the lodge has a newly renovated common room area for dining and relaxing.

This 7 day/6 night Hudson Bay Odyssey is available in August/September. For more information please contact Natural Focus.



ROCKY MOUNTAINEER®

MOUNTAINS AHEAD, RAGING WATERS TO THE SIDE,
AND INDULGENCE ALL AROUND.



Embark on an awe-inspiring rail journey as you travel through the Pacific Northwest and the Canadian Rockies at the height of hospitality onboard Rocky Mountaineer.

With historic storytelling, delicious onboard cuisine, and iconic destinations, this is more than a luxury trip—it's a life-changing experience.

**For more information please contact Natural Focus
on 1300 363 302 or visit www.naturalfocussafaris.com.au**

ALL ABOARD AMAZING