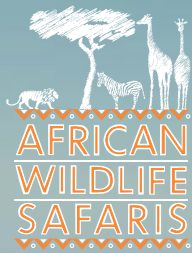


NATURAL FOCUS



THE TALKING DRUM

2020 Vol 2 - Part 1



CELEBRATING
35 years
OF INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS

NATURAL FOCUS

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

ANTARCTICA & THE ARCTIC

CANADA & ALASKA

INDIA, SRI LANKA, NEPAL & BHUTAN

SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA



NATURAL FOCUS

AFRICAN WILDLIFE SAFARIS

AFRICA

INDIAN OCEAN

NORTH AFRICA

THE MIDDLE EAST



AFRICAN WILDLIFE SAFARIS



INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS

Welcome to Part 1 of our Spring Newsletter for 2020 in what has been a challenging year for everyone. We would like to thank all our loyal clients for their patience and understanding and look forward to a day soon when we can design fabulous tailor-made holidays for you once again.

Even though we are stuck at home we can still dream and plan, and so this newsletter is full of tempting travel experiences and remarkable wilderness destinations, all in our own back yard. These are just a selection of our exciting new program of tours and accommodation within Australia and New Zealand. This program was actually launched a few years ago but was put on the back burner as we simply didn't have time to fully commit to it. A lot of research, thought and effort has gone into the construction of this program and we are very excited to introduce to you some of the outstanding travel options on offer close to home. So take a look at our features on Australia and New Zealand's iconic landscapes, luxury lodges and hotels.

For the more adventurous, there is no better time than now to check out the great outdoors. Featured on pages 8 and 9 are two of our

favourite accommodated, multi-day hikes. Discover south east Queensland's dramatic Scenic Rim while staying in delightful eco-cabins and tented camps, or explore the remote beauty of the Flinders Ranges in the South Australian outback.

Across the Tasman, New Zealand is well-known for its awe-inspiring landscapes, dramatic scenery, adventure-based activities and unique Maori culture - but it is also home to some of the most luxurious and exclusive hotels and lodges in the world. A double-page feature (pages 12/13) highlights the country's three Relais & Château properties that blend pure elegance with all that makes New Zealand special.

Read on to discover some of our region's many remarkable places. To visit the Australia & New Zealand website please click here: <https://www.naturalfocusaustralia.com.au/>. Also keep an eye out for Part 2 of our newsletter coming soon, featuring some of our other magnificent worldwide destinations.

 
Stephen and Sara Cameron - Founders



FEATURES

- 4 CONSERVATION UPDATE
Kangaroo Island Bushfire Conservation
- 6 OUR UNIQUE CONTINENT
Luxury Lodges of Australia
- 8 THE GREAT OUTDOORS
Guided Walks
- 10 BACKYARD GETAWAYS
Spicers Retreats
- 12 PURE LUXURY
New Zealand's Robertson Lodges

Our Latest BROCHURES

You can download all our brochures & newsletters from africanwildlifesafaris.com.au



Front cover photograph courtesy of: Shutterstock | Internal photographs courtesy of: Capella Lodge, Kangaroo Island Wildlife Network (KIWN), Longitude 131, Paul Frank, Robertson Lodges, Shutterstock, Spicers Retreats, Tourism Australia

CONSERVATION UPDATE

KANGAROO ISLAND

With all that's happened so far in 2020 the devastating bushfires that ravaged the Australian bush last summer may seem like ancient history. Yet there has been plenty of significant conservation efforts going on in the background.

The Kangaroo Island Wildlife Network (KIWN), led by President Katie Venable, has worked tirelessly to rehabilitate the heavily affected areas of the island and aid the recovery of the endangered Glossy Black Cockatoo. Before the fires, their population was estimated at just 400 individuals and as they feed almost exclusively on the seeds of the drooping she-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) there was grave fear for the species survival.

In a boon to restoration efforts, The Glossy Black Recovery Program received 46 nesting boxes from another cockatoo conservation program in Western Australia. Saving time and resources, the boxes were installed in important areas across the island and there are currently 25 confirmed nestlings.

Attention has since turned to strategically planting 6000 drooping she-oak seedlings and protective tree guards. This was made possible from our donation of AUD\$11,600 made earlier this year on behalf of our clients. The seedlings were grown by the Department of Environment at Kangaroo Islands native plant nursery and will be planted along with native sugar gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) - the preferred natural nesting hollows of the species.

According to Katie it will still be some time before the impacts of the newly-planted trees are truly seen. "It will take 5-7 years before the trees produce nuts that can be eaten by the Glossy Black Cockatoo. One thing that this event has taught us is how to be flexible with the diverse needs of our wildlife".

The initial stages of the recovery program are very promising. We'd like to thank our clients once again and if you would like find out more about other exciting aspects of the KIWN or donate to the project please go to:

kiwildlifefocus.wixsite.com/kiwn/donations




NATURAL FOCUS


Kangaroo Island
Wildlife Network

AUSTRALIA

OUR UNIQUE CONTINENT

Australia is the world's smallest continent, yet the sixth largest country. It's diversity and uniqueness is unparalleled, which is why it's so astounding and exciting to explore. Natural wonders abound from monolithic Uluru in the Red Centre to the famous Great Barrier Reef that runs along the country's north-eastern coastline.

Renowned for its wildlife, Australia is home to an incredible number of endemic species - in particular marsupials that carry young in their pouch. Iconic species including the kangaroo, emu, platypus, koala and wombat are high on the bucket list when travelling Australia. The Grampians National Park in Victoria

and Blue Mountains National Park in New South Wales are two regions where these species can be regularly sighted.

With over 40,000 years of history, Aboriginal culture can be found far and wide across the landscape. Indigenous rock-art sites are held sacred by elders, as these incredible, well-preserved paintings tell stories about their ancestors - some thought to be 60,000 years old. Kakadu and Nitmiluk national parks in the Northern Territory are two of the best regions to see these beautiful artworks as well as magical waterfalls and dramatic gorges.



LONGITUDE 131°

Hidden in the Central Desert amidst a sea of red dunes with views of Uluru, Longitude 131° epitomises the Luxury Lodges label. This phenomenal lodge features aboriginal artworks throughout, with each tented suite a private sanctuary within the desert. Daily excursions explore the renowned rock formations and gorges of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park whilst learning about Aboriginal culture. The magical 'Field of Light' art phenomenon is an experience not to be missed.

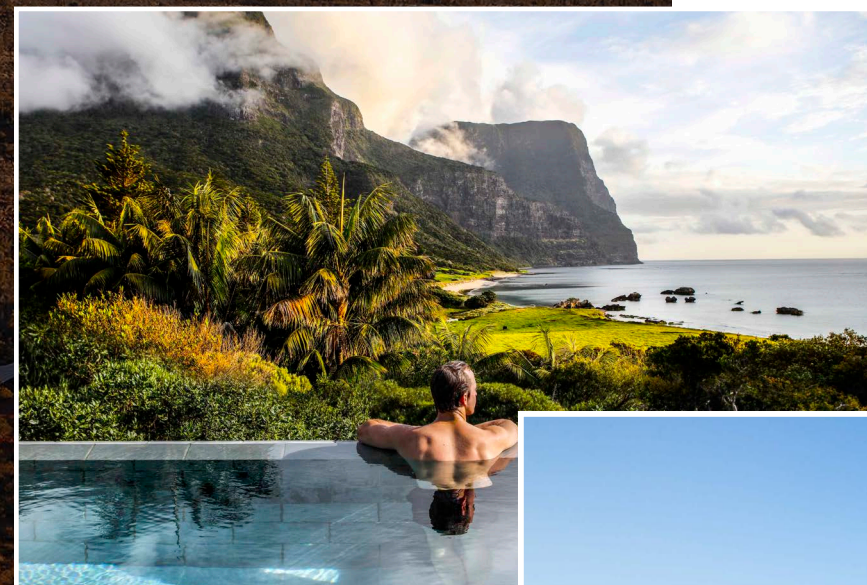
LUXURY LODGES OF AUSTRALIA

Luxury Lodges of Australia are a collection of outstanding camps and lodges that connect Australia's sweeping plains and rugged mountain wildernesses. These high-end properties aren't just a beautiful and luxurious place to stay - they showcase the very best Australia has to offer through conservation and the environment. Each property provides guests with a unique, interactive and immersive experience.



CAPELLA LODGE

Another member of Luxury Lodges, Capella Lodge on World Heritage-Listed Lord Howe Island offers a relaxed yet exclusive island escape. A jewel 700 kilometres off the New South Wales coastline the island harbours stunning kaleidoscopic coral reefs and mountainous scenery. Hiking and snorkelling are popular whilst the 9-hole golf course can only be described as the most picturesque in Australia.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

GUIDED WALKING



There's no better time than now to discover Australia's great outdoors on a luxury-serviced multi-day hike. Australia has some of the best walking tracks in the world through World Heritage-listed national parks, along pristine coastlines or across breathtaking outback landscapes.

Natural Focus offers a selection of sensational accommodation-based bush walking experiences, that combine active walking with gourmet meals, silver service and outstanding lodge or camp stays.

Each day you can expect to carry a light pack with only your essential items, before arriving at a luxury lodge or eco-friendly cabin where you can relax, unwind and enjoy the comforts of your own private room.

Walks vary from easy coastal paths to more strenuous rolling hills or mountain climbs, but always making the most of your time in the outdoors. Take in the tranquility of the pristine wilderness as you stop and learn about the different plants, birdlife or history of the region. There are also fascinating spots to stop and explore, perhaps a hidden beach cove or cave. Featured (right) are two of our favourite hikes, found in two very different areas of Australia:

SCENIC RIM TRAIL

South East Queensland's stunning Scenic Rim Trail explores the beautiful mountains, ridges, forests and volcanic plateaus of the Main Range National Park. Discover the beautiful landscapes that make this area so spectacular, keeping an eye out for wildlife including platypus or the endangered Brush-Tailed Rock-Wallaby. There are two options available, a 2-night hike or longer 5-night option, but both offer awe-inspiring scenery, expert guides and superb accommodation.



ARKABA WALK

This 4-day walk through South Australia's primordial Flinders Ranges, with over 600-million years of geological history is one of Australia's more incredible experiences. This unique and diverse environment of dramatic rocky outcrops and dry creek beds lined with River Red Gums is home to iconic species including Red and Western Grey Kangaroos, wallaroos and emus. Wilpena Pound and the Elder Range provide spectacular backdrops, whilst the Milky Way shimmers overhead at night as you lie in your open-air 'star bed' or sheltered bush hut.



BACKYARD GETAWAYS

When looking for a home-grown getaway in New South Wales or southeast Queensland there's nowhere better than Spicers Retreats. Their 9 unique properties embrace everything to love about Australia; incredible wilderness locations, award-winning restaurants, a superb variety of outdoor experiences and first-class accommodation. With boutique lodges in some of Australia's most iconic locations it's easy to combine two or three together to get a true appreciation of Australia's surreal beauty.

SYDNEY & BRISBANE

Spicers' city properties are the perfect base to discover local attractions or as the starting point for a state-wide itinerary. Spicers Potts Point in inner Sydney is a beautifully restored 19th century terraced house close to art galleries, trendy cafes and superb restaurants. Spicers Balfour is one of Brisbane's top boutique hotels, boasting just 17 guest rooms, a chef-hatted restaurant and roof-top bar with city skyline views.

BLUE MOUNTAINS & HUNTER VALLEY

In New South Wales, hidden amongst towering eucalypts in the Blue Mountains, Spicers Sangoma Retreat offers an immersive escape where bush walks and morning yoga are on the daily schedule. Spicers Guesthouse and Spicers Vineyard Estate in the Hunter Valley region are perfect for wine or fine-dining enthusiasts. Explore some of the country's best vineyards and enjoy the culinary delights on display at award-winning restaurants.

SUNSHINE COAST

A Queensland getaway wouldn't be complete without a visit to the tranquil Sunshine Coast. Just 35 minutes from the city, Spicers Clovelly Estate offers French style luxury, peaceful meditation and spa treatments, chef-hatted dining and "Tour de France" wine tastings. Neighbouring Spicers Tamarind Retreat is an Asian-inspired rainforest sanctuary, exuding calm and elegance where guests can enjoy the stunning natural setting.

SCENIC RIM

Just across the border on south-east Queensland's Scenic Rim, Spicers Peak Lodge and its surrounding wilderness is just waiting to be discovered. The World Heritage Listed Main Range National Park is on the doorstep, and exciting walks and mountain biking tours are complemented by relaxing spa experiences. Just one hour from Brisbane the beautiful Spicers Hidden Vale offers a similar experience, and combines luxury with country charm.



Spicers Balfour Hotel



Spicers Clovelly Estate



Spicers Sangoma Retreat



Spicers Hidden Vale

NEW ZEALAND

PURE LUXURY

Regarded by many as one of the world's most beautiful destinations, New Zealand is a land of jaw-dropping landscapes - towering mountains, glimmering lakes, deep fjords and white-sand beaches. Not only does it feature hidden wonders such as mythical hobbit holes, but the country boasts sophisticated cities, world-renowned wineries, fascinating Maori culture and award-winning luxury lodges.

Robertson Lodges' trio of Relais & Châteaux status properties can be found amidst stunning wilderness spanning the length of New Zealand. All three lodges offer a different landscape to explore, but guests can expect the same high standards of personalised service, gourmet cuisine and elegant accommodation at each.

THE LODGE AT KAURI CLIFFS

In 2001 a large piece of farmland near the North Island's Bay of Islands was developed into a championship golf course. Overlooking a vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean the Lodge at

Kauri Cliffs soon followed, featuring 22 opulent guest suites set in lush grounds amid native forest.

THE FARM AT CAPE KIDNAPPERS

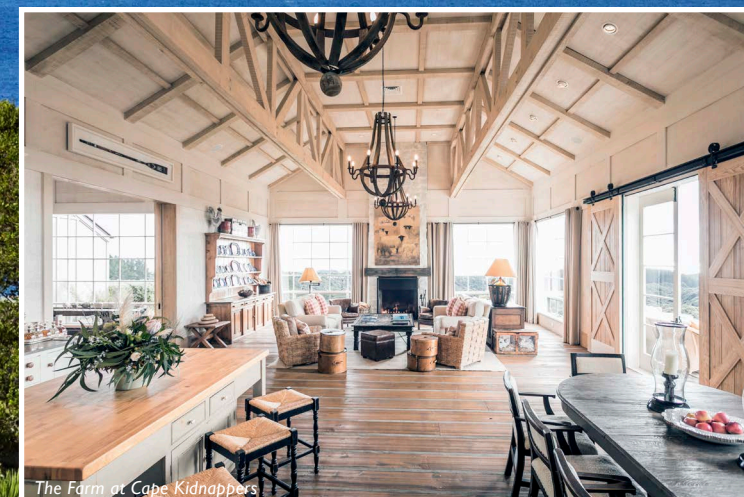
Situated on the North Island atop rolling hills and rugged cliffs overlooking Hawke's Bay, this boutique lodge offers luxurious yet rustic suites created for complete comfort and relaxation. Aside from exquisite dining options featuring locally sourced produce, guests can relax in the splendid day spa or spend their days exploring the region on foot, by mountain bike or helicopter.

MATAKAURI LODGE

Hidden on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, Matakauri Lodge boasts incredible panoramic mountain views from just about every window. Located just outside Queenstown, the lodge blends complete luxury with the adrenaline-based adventures the town is best known for.



The Lodge at Kauri Cliffs



The Farm at Cape Kidnappers



Matakauri Lodge

The Lodge at Kauri Cliffs