

# ▲ SPECTRUM HOLIDAYS CHRONICLE

SEPTEMBER 2012 NEWSLETTER

Hi fellow thrillseekers! We are back again with the next edition of our newsletter.

## Staff News

In late October, Dana will sadly be leaving to return to Canada. Since joining in November 2008, Dana has made an enormous contribution to our business. During her time with Spectrum Holidays, Dana has assisted many clients with their arrangements for group and individual tours. We will miss Dana's knowledge, expertise and dedication.

## Customer Loyalty and Early Bird Incentive Schemes

We would like to remind everyone about our customer loyalty scheme announced in the last newsletter. If you have travelled on a tour we organised, you are entitled to a discount of \$250 per person on future bookings. The scheme applies to our own tours rather than those operated by other companies.

We are also introducing an early bird discount scheme for our Alaska Canada group tours. If you have returned your booking form and paid the deposit by 30 November 2012, you will receive a \$250 per person discount. The discount for the Winter Tour is \$100 per person.

Unfortunately, the two schemes cannot be combined. If you qualify for the customer loyalty and early bird discounts, we will apply the greater of the two savings. Other conditions can be found on the news item page of our website.

## Electronic Updates

In addition to mailing out printed newsletters two to three times per year, we are planning to email updates each month. The emails will provide an overview of what's been happening, interesting news articles and updates on our tours.



Bear viewing at AnAn, Early Summer tour 2012

## Staying in touch on Facebook

In June we setup a Spectrum Holidays Facebook page. The Facebook page was trialled on our Early Summer Alaska and Canada tour. Every couple of days, we posted photos and news for family and friends to keep track of what was happening on the tour.

We know members of some past tour groups like to catch up to relive memories and share tales of past glories. These reunions have taken a variety of forms ranging from pyjama parties right through to dinner at the local pub.

If you are a Facebook user, please feel free to post photos or reports from your reunions on our Facebook page. If you don't have Facebook, please email material to us and we will happily update our Facebook page with your memories.

There is a link in the top right corner to our Facebook page. If you have your own Facebook account, we would be grateful if you could "like" us.

## Alaska Canada Travel Tips Guide

We are currently in the process of developing a simple travel guide for Alaska and Canada. The guide will provide tips and advice on designing itineraries and selecting places to visit. Copies of the guide will be available for download from our website and can also be sent out via email. If you would like a copy or know anybody that might be interested in reading the guide please let us know.

## Information sessions for clubs

If you belong to a club, and the members are interested in learning about any of the destinations where we organise tours, please let us know. Over the past few years we have run information sessions for groups such as Probus Clubs, Walking Clubs and Car Clubs. Whilst sessions are generally held in the Melbourne area, we do travel to other states.

## REFLECTIONS ON 2012 GROUP TOURS

*"Like all great travellers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen" Benjamin Disraeli*



Spring Alaska Canada Group



Early Summer Alaska Canada Tour



Fall Group



Gabi's Wanderers

### Alaska & Canada

Murray Osler and members of our Spring Group departed Australia in mid May. Much of the countryside in Alaska was still covered with snow when they arrived. Last winter was extremely cold and the group was able to view frozen rivers and majestic snow covered mountains. Whilst in Wrangell, some entrepreneurial members of the group chartered a light plane and headed across to Sitka for the day.

In late June, our Early Summer Group kicked off in Vancouver. Highlights of the tour included watching the Canada day celebrations in Banff and superb bear viewing at AnAn. During the course of the tour, we enjoyed the company of local guides such as Dianne and Maryanne from VIARail, Jim Leslie from Alaska Waters, Scott and Maurice from Premier Alaska Tours and Jesse from Brewster.

Our final tour for the year has just returned. The Fall Group experienced an Indian Summer, the temperatures on many days of the tour was well above 20 degrees celsius. The group also enjoyed excellent bear viewing at AnAn. We have heard on the grapevine the locals in Haines are still talking about the fishing exploits of John.

### Norfolk Island

In July, Charlie (Murray in disguise) and his angels (Sue, Marie and Christine) spent 7 days on Norfolk Island. This merry little band explored the Island from top to bottom. In a moment of weakness, Charlie actually agreed to cook the evening meals for the group. Needless to say the angels happily agreed to these arrangements.

### Scandinavia & Russia

Our Scandinavia and Russia tour is currently underway. On 1 September 2012 Jenny Laity and the tour members departed Australia. The group will tour Moscow and St Petersburg before heading into Finland, then north through Lapland to the town of Kirkeness at the top of Norway. They will then board a Hurtigruten ferry for a six day voyage down the Norwegian Coastline to Bergen. After leaving the ferry they will travel by rail to Oslo and Stockholm before finishing the tour in Copenhagen.

### Gabi's Wanderers

A group of 12 friends, affectionately known as Gabi's Wanderers, toured Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The group spent four weeks visiting a wide variety of interesting places including Saigon, Hoi An, Hue, Hanoi. Sapa, Halong Bay, Vientiane, the Plain of Jars and Angkor Wat.

# ADVENTURES ACROSS THE GLOBE

*"It is good to have an end to journey towards; but it is the journey that matters in the end."* Ursula Le Gun

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It always interesting to look back at the unusual and exciting places where people travel each year. This is not an exhaustive list.....just a snapshot of where some of our clients have ventured during 2012.

## **Alaska, Canada and USA**

Kim visited Dutch Harbour at the tip of the Aleutian Islands and then caught an Alaska Marine Ferry back to Kodiak Island. This was the first time, since we started organising tours to Alaska almost 20 years ago, we have sent anyone to Dutch Harbour. Kim also went on a four night/three day Stikine River Safari along with Ken & Alison and Michael & Gail. This fabulous trip from Wrangell included two nights at Telegraph Creek and one night at the Glenora Guest Ranch which is owned by Nancy Ball. If you have seen the Billy Connolly series "Journey to the Edge of the Earth", you might well recognise Nancy Ball as she was featured in one of the last episodes.

Nick & Ursula and Ralph & Nancy both stayed at the floating Great Bear Lodge which can only be accessed by floatplane from Port Hardy. Graham & Heather and Alan, Annette & Scott all enjoyed stays at Sheep Mountain Lodge and the remote Kennicott Glacier Lodge.

A number of clients including Bob & Kay and John & Cathie explored the Maritimes Provinces. John & Cathie also toured extensively through mainland USA including many of the National Parks. Anne & Thomas and Geoff & Judith both spent time in the National Parks on the West Coast.

In late September, four of our clients are flying across to Los Angeles. They are then going to collect a car and drive the famous Route 66 from Santa Monica to Chicago.

## **Africa**

A family of four went on a tour of South Africa and Victoria Falls. Their itinerary included a variety of activities including hiking, game viewing, Zambezi River cruise, elephant safari, rafting and a lion encounter tour.

## **Middle East**

In November, four of our clients are touring the Holylands in Jordan and Israel. They will visit many historical Christian sites such as Petra, Dead Sea, Galilee, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Mt Carmel and Jordan River.

## **United Kingdom**

This year we booked three clients on tours of England with Sisley Garden Tours. The tour, which culminated with a visit to the Chelsea Flower Show, included visits to gardens such as Great Dixter, Beech Court, Pashley Manor, Great Comp, Heaver Castle and Wisley.

## **Europe**

We have some clients heading to Europe in the near future where they will undertake two pilgrim walks. The first from St Jean de Port to Logrono and the second Sarria to Santiago de Compostella.

Michael and Jan visited Iceland and the Baltic States. John & Elaine went on a guided barge and cycling tour through Holland and toured Spain and Portugal.

Four other clients have just set out on a five week trip to Europe where they will visit St Petersburg, Helsinki, Tallinn, Riga, Berlin, Prague, Budapest, Plitvice Lakes, Dalmatian Coast and Vienna.

## **Asia**

Richard and Margaret went on a guided bird watching tour through China. We designed this itinerary in conjunction with our local suppliers in China. Casey & Stuart travelled through Borneo and visited areas such Kuching, Batang Ai, Damai Beach, Kota Kinabalu, Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary and Sukau Rainforest Lodge.

## IN THE NEXT EDITION

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In mid October, Hugh McMaster, Murray Osler, Ros Nicholson and members of our Borneo tour group will be taking off. At the conclusion of the Borneo tour, they are heading to Indonesia. In the future, we are looking at the possibility of running tours of Indonesia using services such as the new express trains. The Indonesian Government has recently purchased some German built ferries and we are looking at the viability of including these in the itineraries.

We are also in the process of designing a series of itineraries for people interested in travelling through the USA by rail. The itineraries will combine rail travel with sightseeing activities and tours. If you are interested in the mighty Mississippi River, we have some good news. We are developing tours that enables you to link a Mississippi River cruise with rail travel.

## FUTURE ESCORTED GROUP TOURS

*"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" Lao Tzu*



Inle Lake

### Myanmar and Laos with Mekong River Cruise and Vietnam extension

Our proposed tour will give you an opportunity to experience some of the most interesting parts of Myanmar. Highlights of the tour include colourful Yangon, Bagan's pagodas, a cruise on the Irrawaddy, the WW2 Burma Railway Memorial, the crafts of Mandalay, viewing the floating villages and unique leg rowing fishermen on Lake Inle. In Laos visit royal Luang Prabang, the Plain of Jars that still mystifies experts and the delightful quaint French colonial town of Vientiane.

The extension includes a Mekong River Cruise from Saigon to Siem Riep plus Hanoi, Hoi An and overnight Halong Bay cruise. Highlights of the cruise include the Mekong Delta's floating markets, Phnom Penh, Tonle Lake and incomparable Angkor Wat.

**Departing: November 2013**

**Estimated costs per person: TBA**



Lavender fields near Gordes, Provence

### France and Italy Walking Tour

The tour has been carefully designed to include a selection of the best walks in Provence, The Cinque Terre and the Lakes District of Italy. On these walks you will experience rugged terrain, mountains, countryside and coastal panoramas including the wonderful scenery of the Swiss Alps. In addition to the walks, we have included a tour of the beautiful Loire Valley where we stay in a chateau to enhance the experience in this historic region. We begin in Paris and conclude in Venice giving you the option for individual travel arrangements before and after the tour. We have included stays of two or more nights where possible and allowed time at leisure where you can relax or continue exploring.

**Departing: September 2013**

**Estimated costs per person: \$12,000**



Kluane National Park

### Alaska Wilderness Group Tour

We are designing a tour for people who would like to return to Alaska and explore more of the amazing scenery. The tour is likely to include Kodiak Island, Matanuska Glacier, Wrangell St Elias National Park, Kluane National Park, Haines and Glacier Bay National Park. The tour will climax in Wrangell with a four day/ three night tour down the Stikine River with Jim Leslie from Alaska Waters to Telegraph Creek.

**Departing: August 2013**

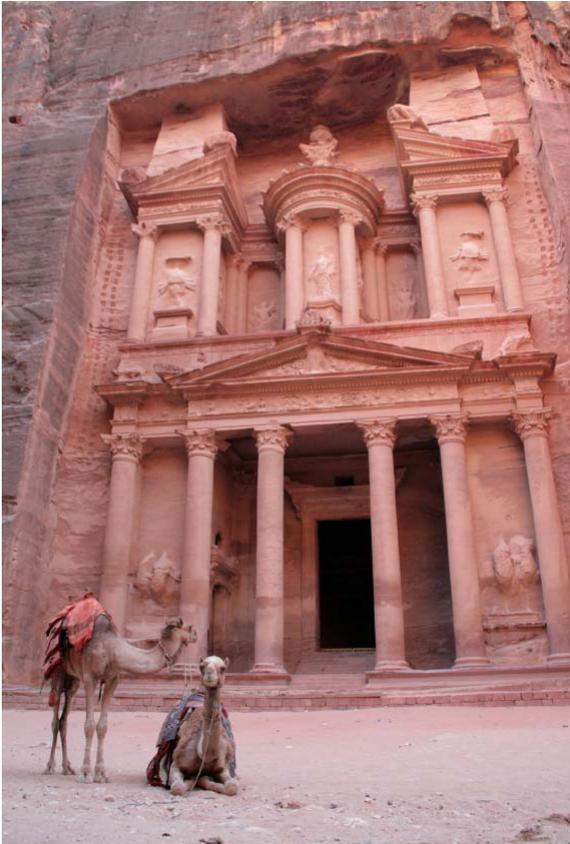
**Estimated costs per person: \$11,000**



Macchu Pichu



Winter in Alaska



Petra

## South America

The Rumba and Tango epitomize South America's vibrant scenery and culture. We have designed a tour which is somewhat different to normal. Unusual features of the itinerary include attending a Chilean rodeo, travelling on the new express sleeper train in Argentina, staying overnight on a working ranch and visiting the gaucho (cowboy) capital.

The tour will visit Santiago, Southern Lakes crossing from Chile into Argentina, Buenos Aires, Iguassu Falls, Rio de Janeiro and Lima. You will also have the option to visit Cuzco, Macchu Pichu and Lake Titicaca or the Colca Canyon. Other extensions you can consider include the Galapagos, Easter Island and Antarctica.

**Departing: October 2013**

**Estimated costs per person: TBA**

## Alaska Winter Tour

Before heading to Alaska we will spend a couple of nights in Seattle, this will give us an opportunity to purchase any extra winter clothes we require. The Alaska part of the tour will start in Fairbanks, where we visit the World Ice Art Championships and take a tour out to Chena Hot Springs in search of the Northern Lights. The group will travel on the Alaska Railroad through the snow covered Interior to Talkeetna for a night, then travel by road to Anchorage where we join up with Premier Alaska Tours Winter Wonderland Excursion. The tour includes a visit to Alaska Wildlife Center and behind the scenes tours of Seward Sealife Center and the Alaska Zoo. A highlight of the winter tour will be participating in various events associated with the Iditarod.

**Departing : February 2013**

**Estimated costs per person: \$6,600**

## Western USA National Parks

We are currently working on the itinerary for a proposed group tour of the West USA National Parks. The tour would visit a variety of National Parks such as Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Zion, Monument Valley, Bryce Canyon and Mesa Verde.

**Departing: Late September or early October 2013**

**Estimated costs per person: TBA**

## Other Tours

We are also working on itineraries for possible escorted group tours to the Dalmatian Coast and Turkey, Africa and the Holylands. Further details of these tours will be published in our next newsletter. Please let us know if there are other areas on your "bucket list". In addition to running our own tours, we are also very happy to assist you in making reservations on tours operated by other travel companies.

# REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please send information on the following:

## Escorted Group Tours

- Myanmar, Laos with Mekong Cruise and Vietnam extension.....
- France and Italy Walking Enthusiasts.....
- Alaska Wilderness.....
- South America.....
- Alaska Winter.....
- Alaska and Canada.....

## Individual Tour Packages

- USA Rail Holidays.....
- Asia.....
- Alaska and Canada.....

## Other Areas of Interest or Comments

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## Name(s) and Contact Details

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Please mail this form to Spectrum Holidays, PO Box 201, Mitcham, Victoria, 3132 or fax on 03 8804 2426. You can also email brochure requests to [info@spectrumholidays.com.au](mailto:info@spectrumholidays.com.au)

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