

MARCH 2014

ENDEAVOUR

THE MAGAZINE FROM AUSTRAVEL, EXPERTS IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND & SOUTH PACIFIC

Explore New Zealand
with the experts,
Grand Pacific Tours

Top 10
*Road
Trips*

See our top road trips in
Australia and New Zealand

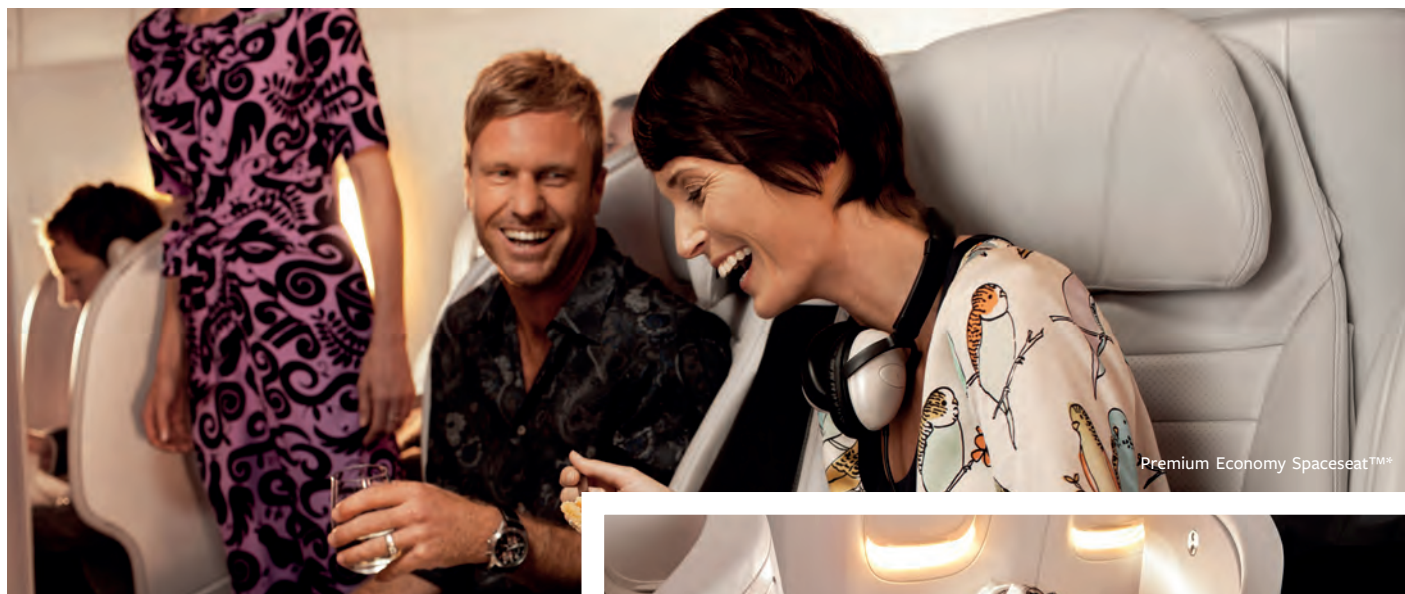
Discover the
mesmerising islands of
French Polynesia

**Planning your
next holiday?**


Take a peek at our top
events and festivals in 2014

Fly with Air New Zealand

– more ways to New Zealand



Award-winning Air New Zealand has introduced one of the world's most innovative long-haul experiences flying daily between London and New Zealand, via Los Angeles. Whether you choose to travel in Economy, designed with comfort and room in mind, or upgrade to the unique Economy Skycouch™* – where three Economy seats transform into a couch so you can put your feet up – opt for more space with the revolutionary Premium Economy Spaceseat™* or their fully lie-flat bed in Business Premier – you can be sure of a unique Kiwi style and thoughtful touches.

AIR NEW ZEALAND 

*Available on the 777-300 service from London Heathrow to Auckland via Los Angeles only. Product varies by aircraft type when travelling via alternative stopovers in Asia and North America with airline partners.

**Based on 2 people travelling economy on selected fares. Terms and conditions apply.



Air New Zealand also offer a number of alternative stopover options down to New Zealand via Asia or North America. Fly with one of their airline partners east via Hong Kong, Shanghai or Tokyo or west via San Francisco or Vancouver. From your stopover destination, you'll pick up your Air New Zealand flight onto New Zealand. You can also travel via Los Angeles on their award-winning 777-300 aircraft.

TAKE ME THERE

RETURN FLIGHT TO AUCKLAND

Economy from £1,129 per person

Upgrade to a Skycouch™ from an extra £715**

Premium Economy from £2,499 per person

Business Class from £4,189 per person

Based on travel May – Jun 2014



Call our expert Travel Designers on **0808 252 5894** or visit austravel.com
Calls are free, mobile and other providers' charges may apply.

Welcome to **ENDEAVOUR** the magazine by Austravel



Our magazine is named after **HMS Endeavour**, the first seagoing vessel to reach the East Coast of Australia in 1770, when Captain Cook went ashore at what is now known as Botany Bay.



G'day and welcome to our latest issue of Endeavour

After a very wet and windy winter why not pack up that suitcase and escape 'down-under'.

Here at Austravel we pride ourselves on our expertise with all things Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific, and are keen to help plan that trip of a lifetime.

This edition of Endeavour covers a variety of top tips and holiday angles for your next Australasia adventure – from island hopping around Fiji, to picking which of our top 10 road trips you are going to try out. As well as articles on stopovers in three amazing cities in the USA, and some top tips from a handful of our expert Travel Designers.

So sit back, relax, be inspired, and let the Austravel Travel Designers create that ultimate holiday for you.

Karen Joyce
General Manager

Above: French Polynesia. Front Cover: Christchurch – Canterbury. Photographer: Images. © Copyright Tourism New Zealand.

Contents

—04—

What's Hot for 2014

A round up of what's new down under

—06—

Island Hopping in Fiji

Ever thought of island hopping around Fiji?

—08—

Grand Pacific Touring

Find out more on the New Zealand touring experts GPT

—10—

Why I Love...

Traver Designer Simon tells us why he loves Queensland

—14—

2014 Events Calendar

Take a look at our top events and festivals happening this year

—16—

Road Trip Adventures

Our top 10 road trips in Australia and New Zealand

—25—

View with a Room

See the stunning views from Berkeley River in Western Australia

—28—

French Polynesia

Learn about the mesmerising islands of French Polynesia

—30—

Spotlight on USA

Why not add a stopover in one of these three top cities?

—32—

A Day in the Life

Find out what Peter, a Penguin Researcher, gets up to on Phillip Island

Visit Austravel.com for full T&C's. Prices are subject to change & availability. All prices are based on twin share and exclude flights unless otherwise stated. Prices are correct at time of going to print, for selected travel periods and may be withdrawn at any time. Calls are free, charges from mobiles and other provider's may vary.

All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays in this magazine are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it.

Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to:
www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate.





Cosmopolitan Hotel St Kilda

A great new addition to Austravel's hotel range, the Cosmopolitan is tucked away in the heart of the seafront suburb of St Kilda, south of Melbourne. It boasts luxurious, boutique accommodation, and we recommend upgrading to an apartment for those longer stays when visiting friends or family, or if you're after a home from which to explore Victoria.

7 nights from £227 per person

Based on travel May 2014



Tali Wiru tour – Red Centre

'Tali Wiru', meaning 'beautiful dune' in the local Anangu language, is a magical experience of fine dining under the Southern skies. Relax with Champagne and canapés around a fire as the sun sets, then head to the top of a dune for a four course dinner with premium Australian wines.

from £193 per person

Based on travel May 2014



See More and Save with an iVenture Card

There are many advantages to an iVenture card, from entry to a wide variety of top attractions in either Sydney, Melbourne, Queensland or Tasmania; as well as exclusive savings and discounts. Just speak to one of our Travel Designers for more information.

3 Day pass from £129 per person

Based on travel up to 31 Dec 2014



Skyrail: Tropical North Queensland

Ten new Diamond View glass-bottomed gondolas have been introduced with panoramic views as you travel up and over the tropical rainforest canopy on the Skyrail experience.

from £139 per person

Based on travel up to 31 Dec 2014



**GUIDED TOURS
& RIVER CRUISES**

APT Reef Island & New Zealand Getaway Tour

A fantastic new 35 day combination of the highlights of both Australia and New Zealand; and time for you to acquaint yourself with native wildlife, rich indigenous cultures and breathtaking landscapes. This escorted tour with APT encompasses all the famous icons in one trip of a lifetime.

35 days from £5,795 per person

Based on selected travel Oct 2014

Etihad

From July 2014 Etihad are introducing a new route into Perth, the new daily flight will be from its hub in Abu Dhabi and is easily connected with daily flights from the main London Airports. This new route makes discovering Western Australia even more accessible.

from £789 per person

Based on selected travel Oct 2014



Island hopping in Fiji

With 333 islands that make up Fiji, island hopping is a must-do for those wanting to explore this popular paradise. Nadi is home to Fiji's International Airport, and acts as a main gateway to the surrounding islands. As you land, enjoy being greeted by friendly locals as they shout 'Bula' meaning 'welcome' and 'life'. Home to many vibrant market places, experience the local culture as you pick up handmade souvenirs and taste delicious delicacies. With a warm year-round climate there is never a bad time to plan a trip around Fiji, however choosing which of the atolls to visit is often the hardest problem.

Mamanuca Islands

The Mamanuca Islands are a stunning collection of 32 small islands, grouped over an expanse of 35 square kilometres. Easily accessed from the main island Viti Levu, the atolls are surrounded by crystal clear waters, and blessed with year-round sunshine, calm seas and gentle ocean breezes. One of Fiji's most popular holiday destinations, combined with some of the best watersports from surfing and scuba diving, to game fishing and parasailing.



TAKE ME THERE

6 NIGHTS

SOFITEL FIJI RESORT AND MATAMANOA
ISLAND RESORT

1nt Sofitel Fiji Resort, return transfers to Matamanoa,
4nts Matamanoa Island Resort, 1nt Sofitel Fiji

Prices from £629 per person

SAVING up to £130 per couple

Based on travel Jun 2014

Austravel Secrets...

"Make sure you visit the Blue Lagoon Caves at the southern end of Yasawa Island – here you can even swim within the hidden chambers."

Katie, Destination Manager.



Yasawa Islands

The Yasawa Islands are a remote selection of unspoilt atolls spread out over approximately 135 square kilometres. Accessed by either boat or a short flight, the islands are relatively untouched by tourism, so despite them taking slightly longer to reach, you'll be able to find your own piece of private paradise.

Embrace the Fijian culture with warming locals and traditional villages, whilst discovering a landscape of palm tree fringed beaches contrasted with the rugged mountains and craggy volcanic peaks. Perfect for exploring on foot, our recommendation would be to take a decent pair of shoes and climb to the top of Wayailwai or Kuata Natural Resort to watch the sun as it begins to rise.



Vanua Levu

The second largest Fijian island, Vanua Levu is one of the South Pacific's best kept secrets. Away from the bustling streets of the main island Viti Levu, the less touristy retreat is set amid beautiful rainforests and secluded bays.

The perfect island for adventure seekers, enjoy the huge range of activities available from hiking and fishing to bird watching and snorkelling. Rich in exotic bird and marine life, make sure you explore the underwater attractions such as the vibrant coral reefs and popular dive site 'Shark Alley' with white tip reef sharks.



Viti Levu

The main island of Viti Levu is home to Fiji's capital, Suva, and is regarded as the heart of the Fijian islands. Offering a combination of beach resorts surrounded by lush mountain scenery and turquoise waters, the island is known for its rugged landscape of dramatic cliffs and volcanic mountains.

With over 50 miles of coastline combining bays, beaches, rocky outcrops and mangroves, the Coral Coast is backdropped by steep mountain ranges and is a picture perfect destination.



See New Zealand *with Grand Pacific Tours*

There's a reason the sun shines on New Zealand before anywhere else – every new day in Aotearoa is something to cherish. The culture is rich, dynamic and is not simply locked away in museums; it's everywhere you look. From North to South, view everything from spectacular glaciers, picturesque fiords and rugged mountains to vast plains, rolling hillsides, subtropical forest, volcanic plateaus and miles of coastline as far as the eye can see.

See New Zealand in comfort as you travel through each region and let Grand Pacific Tours take care of it all by providing value for money coach tours to suit your budgets and interests. As New Zealand coach holiday specialists, Grand Pacific Tours offer four different styles of touring – Affordable, Luxury, Ultimate Small Group and Special Interest, with all departure dates guaranteed to operate.



Affordable coach holidays

Affordable coach holidays offer fantastic value for money, and the extensive list of prepaid attractions sets these tours apart from other similar priced programmes. Experience all the iconic attractions of the North and South Islands including the breathtaking Milford Sound, and enjoy the stunning views on one of the world's great scenic train journeys; The TranzAlpine. You can also choose to include the beautiful Bay of Islands where you will board a luxury catamaran to the famous Hole in the Rock. Itineraries include 8 Day Taste of the North Island; 9 Day Taste of the South Island; 14 Day Panorama and 16 Day Highlights of New Zealand Tour.





Luxury coach holidays

Choose a luxury coach holiday and see New Zealand at a relaxed pace that is fully escorted by a professional Coach Captain and a knowledgeable Tour Guide. With modern, luxurious coaches, sit back in comfort enjoying up to date facilities on board and large panoramic windows as you are led through New Zealand's impressive landscape. Each tour is fully inclusive of extensive sightseeing, ensuring great value for money. Itineraries include the popular 19 Day Rail, Cruise and Coach Holiday, and the 19 Day Grand New Zealand Tour. Two shorter tours of the North and South Islands are also on offer for those with limited time.



Ultimate small group


The ultimate small group touring programme is aimed at the discerning traveller. Travel on a full size coach with only 20 luxury leather seats, panoramic viewing and a level of comfort unparalleled by any other vehicle. Two new vehicles will be on the road from September 2014 boasting a state of the art design and complete with the latest finishes. Enjoy a complimentary welcome drink; free bottled water available daily; onboard selection of glossy magazines and daily newspaper and an intimate farewell dinner with selected beverages - all unique elements which reflect 'business class on wheels'. GPT have carefully handpicked a collection of stylish hotels to add to the experience; providing a luxury touring option without a premium price tag!

Itineraries range from 10 - 19 days.



Austravel's favourite Grand Pacific Tour

19 Day Rail, Cruise and Coach

Experience the romance of rail travel, the majesty of cruising and the luxury of coach on this enthralling holiday. Visit all the 'best of' attractions on the North and South Islands and be escorted by a professional Tour Guide. Highlights include 4 spectacular rail journeys and 5 scenic cruises, including an exclusive overnight cruise in the majestic Milford Sound. Includes 2 nights in Rotorua, Wellington, Queenstown, Te Anau and Dunedin. 

Special interest tours

Grand Pacific Tours specialise in one destination, New Zealand! They are able to focus 100% of their energy on developing new and interesting itineraries that include key festivals and events around the country. The range includes Festive Season tours, Solo Travellers Tours and the innovative Cruise & Luxury Coach Holidays - an exclusive opportunity to discover NZ with a cruise on the sophisticated Celebrity Solstice combined with a luxury coach tour.

TAKE ME THERE

19 DAY RAIL, CRUISE AND COACH
GRAND PACIFIC TOURS

Prices from £2,229 per person
for bookings made before 31 May 2014

To receive discount please quote: Endeavour 14
Based on travel Sep 2014

WHY I LOVE...

Travel Designer **Simon** visits Queensland, and tells us why he loves the iconic sunshine state...

Queensland, home to dazzling landscapes rich in some of the world's most incredible islands, beaches and reefs. Visitors flock to the coast to experience the colourful Great Barrier Reef, or to sail around the stunning Whitsunday Islands. Simon, one of our Travel Designers, is lucky enough to have just returned from his third visit to the sun drenched state.





Simon,
Queensland



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Fraser Island, O'Reillys Rainforest Retreat, Simon feeding a Kangaroo, whale watching, paddle boarding.

Arriving in the Gold Coast we were met by a fantastic, laid back atmosphere before transferring to Mariner's Cove in Main Beach. The moment we arrived we were taken to Paradise Jet Boating Adventures; an experience perfect for adrenaline junkies like myself! The ride lasted around an hour and was full of high-speed spins and sudden twists that leave you soaking wet!

Once we had dried off from Jet Boating, we transferred to O'Reillys Rainforest Retreat in the sub-tropical rainforest of Lamington National Park – a hotel I can only describe as a nature lovers' paradise. Famous for its Tree Top Walk, you can get up close to the rainforest canopy and be surrounded by wildlife and incredible views.

Keeping on the wildlife theme, we visited Australia Zoo next. Hidden in natural bushland, the zoo has over a thousand animals with loads of educational and interactive shows to get involved with. You can even arrange an 'animal encounter', meaning you can touch koalas, kangaroos and even tigers.

After a day out around the zoo, we checked into my favourite property of the whole trip; Rumba Beach Resort. Staying in a massive apartment with two others there was more than enough room, plus my bedroom had its own Jacuzzi which was great! With the perfect location, we had incredible views over the beach with loads of bars and restaurants nearby.

Another adrenaline-fuelled experience was awaiting us early the next morning, with the chance to try jet skiing in the beautiful Pumicestone Passage – definitely a must-do for watersports fans. With really friendly instructors the 40 minute session flew by and soon we were trying out stand up paddle boarding in Noosa.

The paddle boarding was a new experience for me. I've surfed a couple of times before, but found the paddle boarding much harder as you have to keep your balance when you put all the momentum to one side to paddle. Whilst I was the first to end up in the water, I certainly wasn't alone! As we were paddling in the late afternoon, it meant we got to enjoy the sunset as we glided slowly across the water.

The next morning, we woke early, packed our bags and worked our way to Fraser Island for a premium day tour – soon to become my favourite part of my

trip. We took the first ferry of the day to maximise our time there, and it's a good job we did as the island is packed with different places to explore. The moment we arrived we started our full day trip taking in the main sights of the island such as Lake McKenzie, Eli Creek and the Maheno shipwreck. Our guide also laid on a surprise for us by organising a scenic flight over the island, which was amazing!

As a massive wildlife fan, doing the dolphin swim and Fraser Island whale watch tour was by far my highlight. We got to see several Humpback whales breaching with mother and calf doing this simultaneously. I have done whale watching before in New Zealand but this tour exceeded my expectations due to all of the marine life we saw. For me, the dolphin experience was a once in a lifetime opportunity, which I feel very privileged to have done.

We managed to do an awful lot in just six days spent in Queensland. When I saw the itinerary I knew it would be a good trip, but it still beat my wildest dreams. The tours and trips we did were brilliant, and I am very grateful that I had the chance to go on it – I can't wait to return and really want to explore more of the state.

If I could give one tip to someone visiting Queensland it would be to take your time travelling the coast as there is a great deal (and variety) of things to see and do. Whether you're a couple, part of a family, or solo in search of some adventure, Queensland caters for all ages. On this trip I only visited the lower third of the state but having travelled to the parts before, it really is the perfect destination with great scenery, beaches and activities on offer. I can't wait to go back! **A**

TAKE ME THERE

6 NIGHTS

QUEENSLAND SELF DRIVE

Includes 2nts Gold Coast with Australia zoo excursion, 2nts Noosa, 2nts Fraser Island and 7 days car hire

Prices from £619 per person
SAVING up to £100 per couple

Based on travel Jun 2014

The Park Hyatt Sydney



Park Hyatt Sydney offers guests an intimate, residential-style hotel with architecture, design and art that reflects the Australian landscape. With a coveted harbour front location between the world-famous Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge, spacious guest rooms feature floor to ceiling glass doors that open to private balconies, contemporary interiors, and modern bathrooms with dual vanity, wet area, rain shower and deep bathtub. A dedicated team of butlers provides around-the-clock, personalised service for all 155 guest rooms & suites.

TAKE ME THERE

1 NIGHT

PARK HYATT SYDNEY

Prices from £222 per person

Based on travel Jun 2014

Australvel's Essential Journeys

Our Sydney, Rock and Reef itinerary is the perfect way to be introduced to the magnificent country of Australia, combine the icons of Sydney, the fiery red sands of the Outback, and the spectacular colours of the Great Barrier Reef.



DAY 1: SYDNEY

After arriving at Sydney airport you are met and transferred to your chosen hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure – why not head to Circular Quay to get your first glimpse of the world famous Opera House, and iconic Harbour Bridge.

DAY 2: CRUISE THE HARBOUR

Spend a relaxing morning exploring the Harbour aboard Captain Cook's Coffee Cruise – one of the 'must do' experiences whilst in Sydney. This afternoon why not head out to one of Sydney's famous beaches of Bondi or Manly, it's up to you!

DAY 3: BLUE MOUNTAINS

Venture out of Sydney to the famed Blue Mountains, where steep canyons meet lush eucalypt forests. See the magnificent Three Sisters rock formation, tour the small town of Leura and opt to take a ride on the world's steepest scenic railway.

DAY 4: DAY AT LEISURE

A free day to explore the city and its surroundings. Take a scenic seaplane flight, climb to the top of the Harbour Bridge, or stroll around the historic Rocks area.



DAY 5: RED CENTRE – SUNSET OVER THE ROCK

Leave the city behind and fly to the Red Centre (additional cost). Uluru (Ayers Rock) is visually stunning, and a major site of Aboriginal importance. This evening watch the sun set behind the glowing red monolith, changing colour as the light alters. A view to behold!

DAY 6: ULURU SUNRISE AND KATA TJUTA

An early start will be rewarded as the rising sun creates even more varied perspectives of Uluru. Walk part of the base of the rock, before heading to Kata Tjuta (Olgas) for a guided walk through Walpa Gorge.



DAY 7: QUEENSLAND ADVENTURE BEGINS

Fly from Uluru to Cairns (additional cost), where the world heritage rainforest and Great Barrier Reef will offer yet another contrasting slice of Australia. After checking in to your chosen hotel take the rest of the day to explore Cairns.

DAY 8: KURANDA AND TJAPUKAI ABORIGINAL CENTRE

Today is an adventure into the Atherton Tablelands, starting with a scenic rail journey through the rainforest up to Kuranda village. Explore the shops, markets and attractions, before joining the Skyrail gondola for its four mile trip above the rainforest canopy.

DAY 9: GREAT BARRIER REEF CRUISE

Leave the land behind and spend an unforgettable day on the Great Barrier Reef with a Quicksilver catamaran to cruise to Agincourt Reef and the spacious reef platform. Snorkel, dive, or stay dry with a semi-submersible tour.

DAY 10 & 11: DAYS AT LEISURE

The next two days open a whole host of opportunities as the area has so much to offer! Choose to venture further north into the Daintree rainforest and Cape Tribulation, soar over the Tablelands aboard a hot air balloon, or head back to the water with a Low Isles cruise.

DAY 12: DEPART CAIRNS

Time to leave Cairns for the journey home – or maybe this is just the start! Extend your Australian adventure by visiting another state, and experience yet another side of this great and varied land.

TAKE ME THERE

11 NIGHTS

SYDNEY, ROCK AND REEF

Includes 4nts Sydney with Coffee Cruise and Blue Mountains Day Trip, 2nts Red Centre with Sounds of Silence dinner, 5nts Port Douglas with Kuranda Day Trip and Quicksilver Outer Barrier Reef Cruise. Includes road transfers.

Prices from £1,195 per person
SAVING up to £290 per couple

Based on travel Jun 2014

Events Calendar 2014

Planning your next holiday? Before you choose your dates, take a look at our top picks of events and festivals happening across Australia, New Zealand, South Pacific and our range of stopover destinations.

Whether you want to enjoy the famous Melbourne Cup Races, join in paddleboard championships, or take to the dance floor at a music festival in the vineyards, there's always an abundance of activities to keep you amused.

APRIL

Anzac Day

25th April | National

Anzac Day is an annual remembrance of what war means to Australia and New Zealand. Parades, marches and ceremonies take place across the country with Dawn Services commencing at sunrise.



Rip Curl Pro

16th – 27th April | Bells Beach in Torquay, Australia

The annual Rip Curl Pro competition sees Bells Beach in Torquay, Australia's home of surfing, flocked with thousands of spectators desperate to catch a glimpse of some of the world's best surfers.

MAY



Vivid Sydney

End May – June | Sydney, Australia

The annual light and music festival immerses the city of Sydney in vibrant colours. Enjoy an array of music performances and witness the Opera House transform with vivid projections covering the sails each evening.



Aussie wine month

May | Australia

Celebrated throughout May, Aussie Wine month is a national promotion of delicious Australian wine with over 100 events and activities held throughout the month in various cellar doors, restaurants, bars and vineyards.

JUNE

Matariki

28th June | New Zealand

As the Matariki star cluster appears, the Maori tribe celebrate New Year across New Zealand. Head to Auckland for the Matariki Festival to enjoy the city as it bursts with music, dancing and art performances.



Queenstown Winter Festival

27th June – 6th July | Queenstown, New Zealand

Celebrating the 40th anniversary, expect Winter Festival 2014 to be the biggest event so far in the buzzing adventure capital, with live music, street parties and mountain sports.

JULY

Camel Cup

12th July | Alice Springs, Australia

One of the most unusual races you will ever encounter, the Camel Cup is an annual race at Blatherskite Park in Central Australia, an hour from Alice Springs.



Bali Kite Festival

26th – 28th July | Sanur beach, Bali

An impressive three day religious festival near Sanur attracting thousands of participants and spectators to witness the skies as they come alive with hundreds of colourful kites, ranging in all shapes and sizes.

AUGUST

Bay of Islands Jazz & Blues Festival

8th – 10th August | Bay of Islands, New Zealand

Enjoy top performances from musicians from Australia and New Zealand in the stunning Bay of Islands. Set across six different venues, the landscape comes alive with the sounds of smooth jazz and sultry blues.

Hibiscus Festival

August | Suva, Fiji

Featuring arts and crafts contrasted with contemporary dance and activities, the annual Hibiscus Festival takes place in Fiji's capital, Suva, and conclude with a beauty competition for the popular 'Miss Hibiscus' title.

SEPTEMBER



Melbourne Fringe Festival

17th September – 5th October | Melbourne, Australia

The Melbourne Fringe Festival is an art festival to showcase the city's metropolitan culture and creativity. With shows ranging from comedy and visual arts, to cabaret and dance, there is something for everyone.



Spring Festival

September – October | Wellington, New Zealand

Held in the beautifully landscaped Botanic Gardens in Wellington, soak up the colours and fragrances of the spring flowers whilst enjoying a range of activities from workshops to guided walks.

OCTOBER



Opera in the Vineyards

18th October | Hunter Valley, Australia

As the sun set over the vineyards, the spring air is filled with operatic notes at this unmissable event. Enjoy a spectacular evening of fine wine, gourmet food and fantastic music as you are surrounded by stunning views.

Diwali

23rd October | Fiji

Fiji is lit up during Diwali as the 'Festival of Lights' is celebrated with an abundance of candles and decorations. The day is full of colour and community as Hindus in Fiji open their homes to share traditional sweets and food.

NOVEMBER



Melbourne Cup Carnival

1st – 8th November | Melbourne, Australia

One of the most prestigious events in the racing calendar, the Melbourne Cup is a four day carnival attracting thousands to take a punt on the thoroughbreds taking part in the two mile course.



Cycle Challenge

29th November | Lake Taupo, New Zealand

One of the world's premier cycling events, Lake Taupo hosts the scenic Cycle Challenge each year with routes around the undulating landscape, including the famous 160km race around the largest lake in New Zealand.



Toast Martinborough

16th November | Martinborough, New Zealand

A celebration of great food and wine, treat the taste buds at New Zealand's premier food wine and music festival, all within the picturesque setting of Martinborough vineyards.

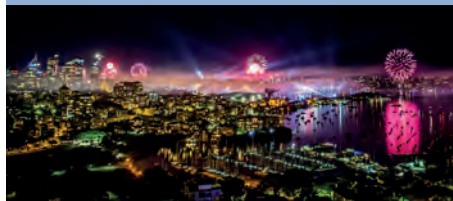
DECEMBER



Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race

26th – 28th December | Sydney to Hobart, Australia

One of the most iconic summer sports in Australia, the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race attracts a huge number of spectators each year, and is classed as one of the most demanding ocean races in the world.



New Years Eve

31st December | National

As the clock strikes midnight the world rejoices in the New Year. Celebrate in Sydney with the fireworks, head to the rooftop bars of Bangkok or simply sit on the sandy shores of Fiji to count down the end of the year.

JANUARY 2015



New Years Day

1st January | Samoa

Be the first to welcome in the year 2015. As the earliest country to see the sunrise each day, sit on a white sandy beach in Samoa to watch as the sky turns bright orange and think about a New Year's resolution.

Australia Day

26th January | National

Australia Day provides the opportunity to come together and rejoice in the nations achievements. Join in the celebrations with street parties and outdoor barbecues, or see Perth's impressive firework display.

FEBRUARY 2015

Chinese New Year

19th February | Hong Kong

Immerse yourself in unforgettable celebration as the city comes alive with lanterns, dragons, dancers and acrobatic performances. Welcome in the New Year in with the free firework spectacular at Victoria Harbour.

Sand Sculpting Championships

February | Surfers Paradise, Australia

Watch as over 180 tonnes of sand is turned into impressive sculptures at Surfers Paradise. The annual free event is held over a weekend, with sculptors from around the world battling it out for the Championship title.

MARCH 2015

Auckland Arts Festival

6th – 24th March | Auckland, New Zealand

A celebration of arts and culture, this festival hosts a range of events across the city from dance and music, to visual arts and exhibitions. Don't miss 'White Night' where the city becomes basked in vibrant colours.

Balloons over Waikato

March 2015 | Waikato, North Island, New Zealand

A five day free event in Waikato that attracts balloon enthusiasts from around the country desperate to catch sight of the hot air balloons as they ascend into the skies whilst the sun begins to rise.

Discover more with a ROAD TRIP ADVENTURE

One of the best ways to see the diverse landscapes of Australia and New Zealand is by motorhome, allowing you the freedom to explore at your own pace. We have pulled together our top 10 recommended road trips.



1 15 DAYS ADELAIDE TO DARWIN

The Explorer's Way cuts through the heartland of Australia, from the luscious green ranges of the Clare Valley wine region, through the red earth of the Outback, to the wildlife mecca of the Top End – an ultimate road trip.



2 5 DAYS RED CENTRE

Watching the sun set over Ayers Rock has to be one of the ultimate experiences, with the ever changing colours glowing against the red earth of the Outback.



3 14 DAYS SYDNEY TO CAIRNS

Travel the East Coast from cosmopolitan Sydney to Tropical Cairns. Don't miss a trip out to the Great Barrier Reef.



4 12 DAYS PERTH TO BROOME

Travel north from Perth to Coral Bay and Monkey Mia, for close encounters with the native dugongs and whale sharks.



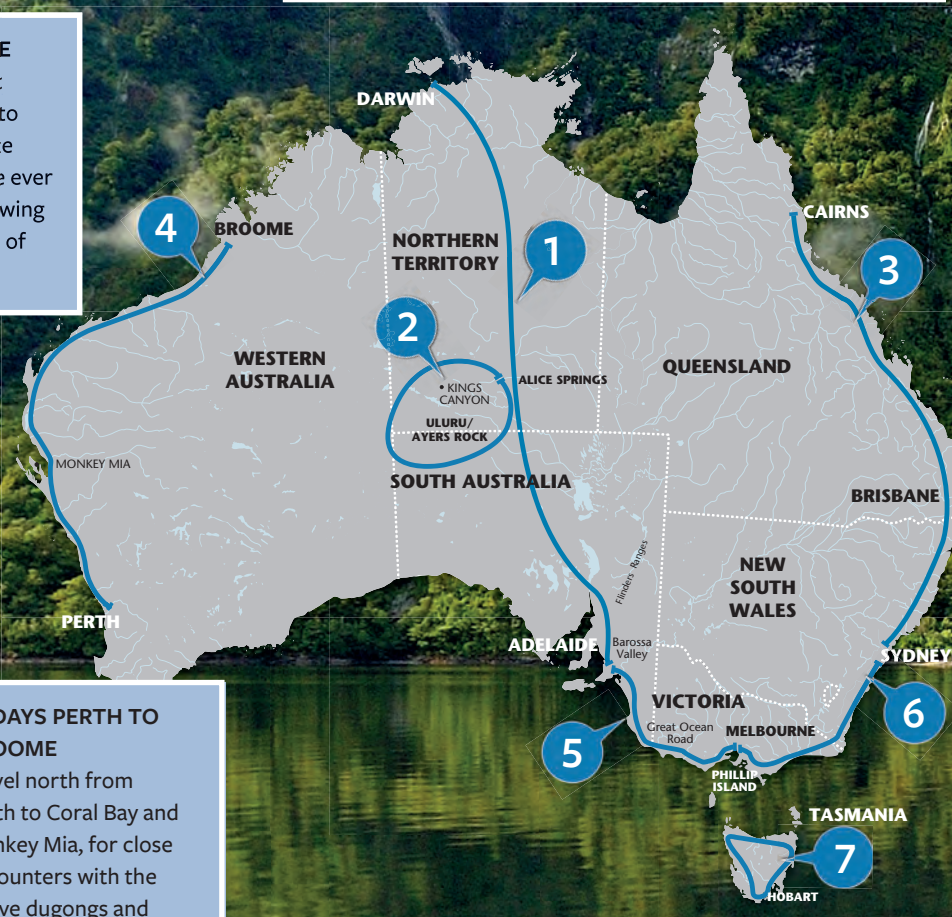
5 6 DAYS MELBOURNE TO ADELAIDE

The Great Ocean Road has been voted one of the most spectacular coastal drives in the world – The Port Campbell National Park is home to iconic views and unspoilt beaches.



6 6 DAYS SYDNEY TO MELBOURNE

Discover one of Australia's best kept secrets, with historic towns, national parks and beautiful surf beaches, spotting local wildlife along the way.





14 DAYS NORTH & SOUTH ISLAND
Experience all that New Zealand has to offer with an ultimate road trip, crossing between the North and South Islands through the picturesque Cook Strait - the most scenic ferry journey you'll ever take!



8 DAYS NORTH ISLAND
Head north to the marine playground of the Bay of Islands, before travelling to the geothermal wonderland of Rotorua, home to shooting geysers and calming hot springs.



8 DAYS SOUTH ISLAND
The South Island is home to the stunning glaciers of Franz Josef and Fox, see them from high above on a scenic flight for an ultimate experience.



10 DAYS TASMANIA
Explore Australia's island state, with natural wilderness and colonial legacy. Don't miss the native Tasmanian Devils!



TAKE ME THERE

15 DAYS AUSTRALIA
HI TOP MOTORHOME

Prices from £25 per day
Based on travel Jun 2014

TAKE ME THERE

15 DAYS NEW ZEALAND
HI TOP MOTORHOME

Prices from £12 per day
Based on travel Jun 2014

The Great Barrier Reef *Adventure*

A visit to Australia's World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef is a once in a lifetime holiday experience, and making the most of your time there is essential. Coral Princess Cruises operate award-winning small ship cruises out of Cairns, and with three, four or seven night options available each week you'll be sure to experience the very best of the 'reef', rainforests and islands in total comfort and maximum style.

All cruises include:

- All meals, morning and afternoon teas and soft drinks
- Use of snorkelling, masks and fins
- Guided coral viewing tours
- Presentations by marine biologists
- Island and Rainforest walks
- Introductory SCUBA diving skills session for first time divers

TAKE ME THERE

4 DAYS

CORAL PRINCESS CRUISE

Prices from £679 per person
SAVING up to £440 per couple

Based on travel Sep 2014



Travellers' Tales

Travel Designer Anthony tells us about his love of Western Australia, sharing his favourite spots and his bucket list destinations.



Anthony
Travel Designer

Where did you visit in Western Australia on your trip? I have spent a month in Western Australia in total, visiting Fremantle, Rottnest Island and exploring a great deal of Perth itself. Outside of the city I did a self-drive in the South West region, where I did everything from visiting Margaret River and Karri Forest, to treetop walks in Walpole. I have also been lucky enough to explore the northern part too where I stopped in Cervantes for the Pinnacles, along with Kalbarri, Monkey Mia, Coral Bay and Exmouth.

What was your favourite place?

My favourite place had to be Kalbarri, a beautiful little town by the sea. It's incredibly scenic as it resides on the mouth of the Murchison River, so you can take little walks by the coast, stopping along the way to watch surfers and enjoy wildlife spots. The town also has a great feel and vibe that is untouched by major tourist developments. Just outside of the town is Kalbarri National Park where you can enjoy great walks with views over huge landscapes and deep cut gorges – I can't wait to go back!

Any must-dos in Western Australia that you would recommend?


Snorkelling with Whale Sharks is a must – the experience is up there as one of the greatest things

I have ever done in my life. I was a bit apprehensive to be honest, but when you dip your head under the water it is just incredible. I didn't really know what to expect at first and couldn't see any signs of a whale shark, but then I looked up and had one heading straight towards me! It was one of those 'freeze in awe' moments. They swim quite quickly but slow enough for you to keep up with them for a minute or so – it might sound corny but that one minute seems to last a lifetime!

Do you have any top tips or advice for those travelling to Western Australia?

Take your time! The distances are huge, so to avoid 'car-lag', as I call it, stop in places like Margaret River and Kalbarri for a couple of nights. Make sure you get out the car to explore the area and enjoy a break from the long journey.

Where is next on your travel bucket list?

Next I would love to spend a couple of weeks between Melbourne and Adelaide, taking my time to explore the Great Ocean Road and the Grampians. I would pop over to Kangaroo Island for a couple of nights, then Murray River and finally head up to the Barossa Valley to indulge in some food and wine. I would like to then finish my time in Adelaide and treat my girlfriend to a meal in Glenelg to watch the sunset over the ocean! On the way home I wouldn't be able to resist the temptation of a stopover, so would probably visit Hong Kong to enjoy a taste of South East Asia – I like to follow my taste buds when I travel! 



TAKE ME THERE

7 DAYS CAR HIRE

WESTERN AUSTRALIA SELF DRIVE

Prices from £559 per person

Based on travel Jul 2014

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Kalbarri, The Pinnacles, Dolphin watching at Monkey Mia, enjoying the beach at Monkey Mia.



The Cook Islands

A place of warming smiles and friendly locals, the moment you land in the Cook Islands you're met with a welcoming atmosphere and a laid back lifestyle. With glorious beaches, a trip to these castaway islands is an unforgettable experience. Offering you a quieter alternative to the larger chains in the South Pacific, the Cook Islands are small and intimate islands just waiting to be explored...

The best way to enjoy the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki is to split your time between the two and enjoy island hopping between the different paradise retreats. With a distance of 164 miles separating the islands, take to the skies on a 50 minute scenic flight, gliding over the turquoise waters and into a true paradise.

Rarotonga

The vibrant heart of the Cook Islands, Rarotonga is a hub of activity amid high mountain peaks and palm edged shores. The circular shaped island offers a picture perfect paradise with warm translucent waters home to colourful reefs and tropical marine life.

Our top experiences in Rarotonga:

Captain Tama's Lagoon Cruise

Snorkel amid colourful reef fish and magnificent coral on a trip around the inner lagoon with Captain Tama's. Head to the offshore island of Koromiri for a fresh fish BBQ on the beautiful beach with enough time to explore the isolated retreat.

Highland Paradise

A must-do for those wanting to embrace the Rarotongan culture, head high into dense bush land for impressive 180° views over the island before being lead through an 'open air museum' with a knowledgeable guide. Learn about the traditional medicine making and plant use, before enjoying a traditional umu cooked dinner.

Day tour to Aitutaki

The perfect day tour to explore Aitutaki, enjoy a 50 minute flight over the turquoise lagoons, before boarding a traditional catamaran and gliding past offshore reefs and sandbars. Stop off at One Foot Island for a BBQ lunch on the beach, followed by snorkelling in the crystal clear waters and returning to Rarotonga by dusk.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Aitutaki Lagoon Resort beach, Leaving One Foot Island in Aitutaki.



Aitutaki

Surrounded by powder white sands and translucent waters, Aitutaki is a breathtaking holiday retreat. Just a short flight from Rarotonga, the island is arguably one of the most beautiful atolls in the world, and a trip to this castaway retreat is a must for anyone visiting the Cook Islands.

Our top experiences in Aitutaki:

Lagoon Cruise

Cruise one of the world's most beautiful lagoons, explore unspoilt beaches and crystal clear waters with vibrant coral reefs and tropical fish. Accompanied by crew from Bishop's Cruises, learn about the history of the landscape, before indulging in a freshly cooked fish BBQ on the sands.

Punarei Cultural Village Tour

A unique opportunity to embrace the ancient culture whilst learning about myths, legends and traditional ways of life, this tour is a great way to discover about our ancestors. Enjoy learning about the history, traditional skills, arts and beliefs of the island of Aitutaki, before enjoying a traditional Umi Kai feast.

One Foot Island

Aptly named as paradise on earth, One Foot Island (also known as Tapuaetai) is one of the 22 islands that make up the Aitutaki atoll. With pristine white sands and bright turquoise lagoons, enjoy snorkelling with the current as you watch tropical reef fish.



Katie, our Austravel Brand Manager, was lucky enough to visit the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki on an amazing trip of a lifetime.

How would you sum up the Cook Islands?

The Cook Islands are simply stunning, you relax the second you step off the plane. For me the highlight was Aitutaki, no words can describe and no picture can do the beauty of this island justice.

Any must-do experiences?

For me a must-do on Rarotonga is to cycle around the island. It's only 33km and the views are amazing, we hired power-assisted bikes from the hotel which made it more bearable in the heat.

Any top tips to future travellers?

Make sure you visit One Foot Island, not only is it home to some of the clearest ocean waters I have ever seen, but the passport stamp is great too! We went here for a delicious BBQ lunch followed by a spot of snorkelling.

TAKE ME THERE

7 NIGHTS

TWIN CENTRE BETWEEN RAROTONGA & AITUTAKI
3nts Sunset Resort Rarotonga, transfers, 4nts
Tamanu Beach Hotel with domestic flight transfers

Prices from £975 per person
SAVING up to £155 per couple

Based on travel Jun 2014

One&Only Resorts



Located in some of the most beautiful locations around the world, One&Only resorts enable you to indulge in luxurious comfort whilst soaking up vibrant destinations. Passionate about quality, One&Only ensure you an unforgettable trip, whether you're on a family holiday, romantic break or after a relaxing spa retreat.

With properties in both Dubai and Hayman Island, a popular option is to combine the two beautiful

locations, enabling you to break up the journey to Australia with a few days stopover in Dubai. Combining the two One&Only resorts is a popular option for travellers wanting to merge the alluring city life of Dubai with the more relaxed beaches of the Whitsunday Islands.

DUBAI

Combine dazzling city life with beautiful beachside relaxation in this city of extremes. Where mountainous desert backdrops are contrasted with glistening skyscrapers and modern designer malls are juxtaposed with traditional souks, Dubai is a must see destination. The perfect stopover en route to Australia, Dubai has plenty to see and do including the world's largest building, Burj Khalifa.

ONE&ONLY ROYAL MIRAGE

An intimate resort nestled in 65 acres of secluded gardens and boasting a beautiful private beach, the One&Only Royal Mirage is a stylish retreat made up of intricate arches and domes combined with towers and courtyards. Divided into three different sections, choose from The Palace, Arabian Court or Residence & Spa – each offering plush furnishings, rich in colour and reflecting the warmth of the Arabian Gulf. Make sure you treat the taste buds to a culinary adventure around the hotel's eight different restaurants and bars before embarking on the range of activities on offer from golf and tennis to the more adrenaline-fuelled desert safaris and scuba diving.

TAKE ME THERE

1 NIGHT

ONE&ONLY ROYAL MIRAGE ARABIAN COURT

Prices from £115 per person

Based on travel Aug 2014



HAYMAN ISLAND

Hayman Island is Australia's private island located within the stunning Whitsundays. One of the most prestigious holiday destinations, a trip to Hayman will allow you to enjoy luscious greenery combined with pristine white sands, azure waters and an abundance of hotels dripping in luxury. The perfect gateway to go out and explore the vibrant Great Barrier Reef and its marine life, Hayman Island is a must in Queensland.

ONE&ONLY HAYMAN ISLAND

Immersed in the spectacular natural environment of the Great Barrier Reef, One&Only Hayman Island is located on the pristine, private island with a beautiful backdrop of the Coral Sea. Nestled amid open pools, luscious gardens and white sands, enjoy the impressive and natural surroundings before dining in the superb selection of restaurants and bars. Offering a range of contemporary Australian and International cuisine, world-class chefs are on hand to create mouth-watering flavours. And, for those wanting to relax and unwind, make sure you book into the Hayman Spa for a range of beauty and spa treatments.

One&Only Hayman Island opens in April 2014.



One&Only
RESORTS

TAKE ME THERE

1 NIGHT

HAYMAN LAGOON ROOM

Prices from £158 per person

Based on travel Jul 2014

Visit Fraser Island

Located on the south coast of Queensland, the World Heritage listed Fraser Island is a popular destination for those wanting to enjoy outstanding natural beauty combined with wildlife watching. Whether you want to discover the colourful sand cliffs and ancient rainforests, or take a dip in the crystal clear freshwater lakes, Fraser has plenty to explore. With so much to see and do, it is no wonder Fraser Island is such a popular destination, one of our favourite places to stay is at the Kingfisher Bay Resort...



Kingfisher Bay Resort

Sitting in perfect harmony with its natural surroundings, Kingfisher Bay Resort had to measure up as a place fit to grace this extraordinary environmental treasure. As you arrive into the jetty, you'll be hard pressed to know there are two hotel wings, self-contained villas and holiday houses here – they're so well hidden in the forest.

Make sure you watch the famous mango-coloured sunset before a delicious dinner in one of the many bars and restaurants.



TAKE ME THERE

3 NIGHTS

KINGFISHER BAY RESORT

Includes Fraser Island Adventure Package and Whale Watching Cruise

Prices from £199 per person

Based on travel Sep 2014

Cool Dingo Youth Adventure Tour

Enjoy an action-packed three days of exploring on Fraser Island with Cool Dingo. The perfect escorted tour for 18-35 year olds, discover the area with like-minded people. Keep an eye out for the resident freshwater turtles in Basin Lake, followed by travelling the Seventy Five Mile Beach, before heading to the Maheno Shipwreck and the surrounding cool rainforests on this fun-packed adventure.

TAKE ME THERE

3 DAYS

COOL DINGO YOUTH ADVENTURE TOUR
Includes all meals, 3 days ranger guided tour, transfers, park fees.

Prices from £262 per person

Based on travel Jul 2014



A View with a Room



BERKELEY RIVER

Only accessible by air or water, Berkeley River is barefoot luxury at its best. Situated in the Kimberley Region, immerse yourself in the unique Outback wilderness, whilst enjoying supreme comfort and service. Stay in one of just twenty ocean view suites on a coastal sand dune which boast stunning views. Join the onsite experts for their nightly stargazing show.



TAKE ME THERE

3 NIGHTS

BERKELEY RIVER RESORT

Includes all meals.

Prices from £2,929 per person

Based on travel in Jun 2014

IT'S A DEAL!

Top value picks from our experts

OFFERS
Not To Be
Missed

OFFERS
EXCLUSIVE
to Austravel

To book any of these great value deals or to find out more information, call our expert Travel Designers on:
0808 252 5894



1

APT East Coast Adventure – 12 day tour Book between 15 Mar and 12 Apr and receive **£200 discount per person**

Taking you through Byron Bay, Brisbane and Cairns, iconic Australian destinations, enjoy two nights on Daydream Island, as well as World Heritage-listed Fraser Island. Continue to the tropical Atherton Tablelands and visit the Great Barrier Reef at Green Island.

Based on select travel Sep 2014.



2

Kakadu National Park day tour from **£131 per person**

Consisting of more than 110,000 square kilometres, Kakadu is the largest national park in Australia. Located in the north-east corner of the Northern Territory and boasts Aboriginal rock art and attracts an abundance of wildlife.

Based on travel up to Mar 2014.



3

Rendezvous Grand Melbourne Superior Room from **£123 per person**

Overlooking the Yarra River in the heart of the city, this hotel is distinguished by its excellent service, historic significance, and elegance. Features 340 stylish guest rooms; upgrade to a Club Room on the heritage floors for ornate decoration.

Based on travel Apr – Sep 2014.

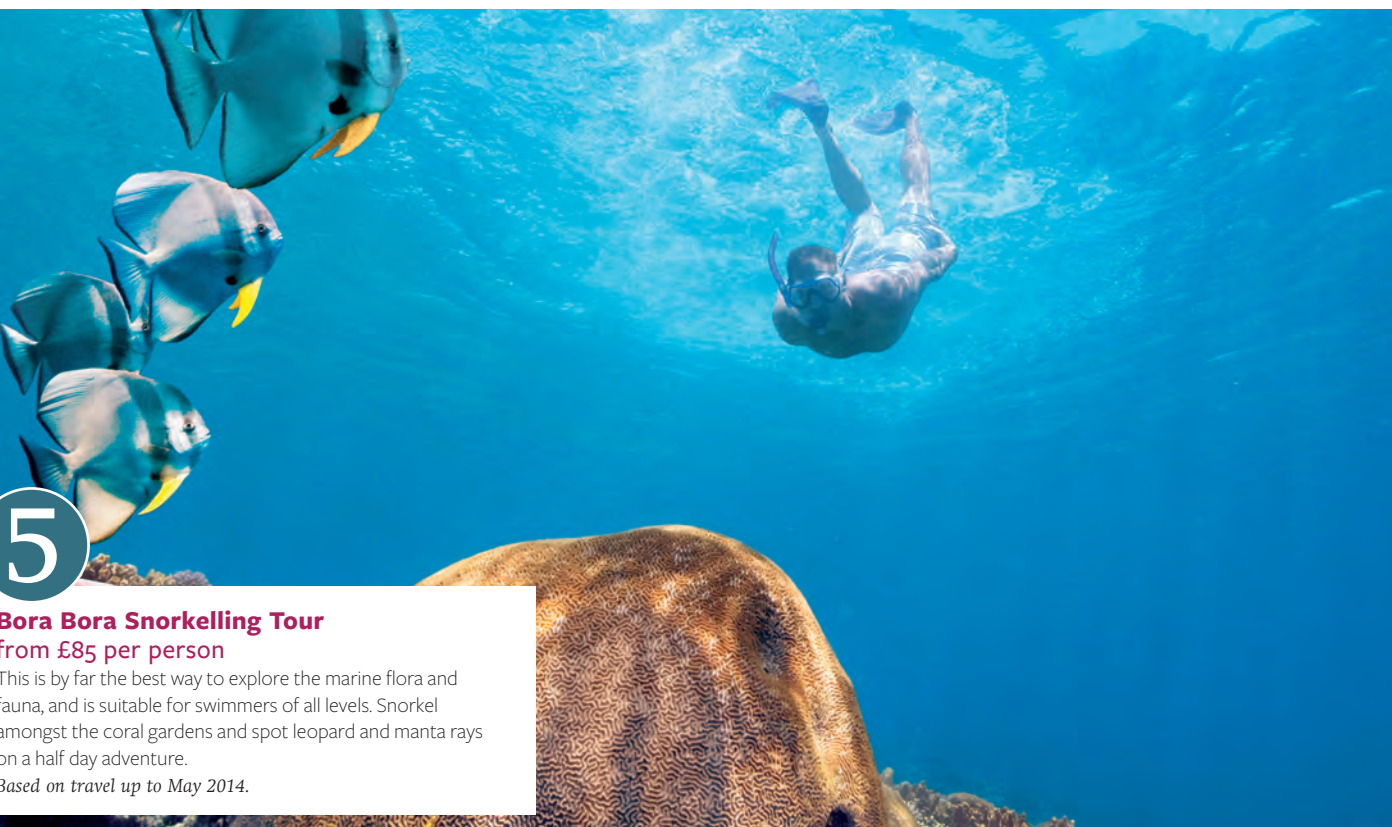


4

Sigatoka River Safari, Fiji from **£108 per person per day**

Take a jet boat safari up the magnificent Sigatoka River for an adventure into the heart of Fiji. Visit authentic Fijian villages and learn of the rich cultures, history, customs and legends of the area.

Based on select travel 2014.



5

Bora Bora Snorkelling Tour from £85 per person

This is by far the best way to explore the marine flora and fauna, and is suitable for swimmers of all levels. Snorkel amongst the coral gardens and spot leopard and manta rays on a half day adventure.

Based on travel up to May 2014.



6

Bay of Islands Cruise from £53 per person

This cruise passes through the spectacular Cape Brett Hole in the Rock, and provides an opportunity to view or swim with the playful bottlenose and common dolphins in their natural environment, before going ashore to one of the most beautiful islands.

Based on travel May 2014.



7

Novotel Queenstown Lakeside from £113 per person, saving £75 per couple

Situated on the shores of glistening Lake Wakatipu in the very heart of Queenstown, the Novotel Queenstown Lakeside offers stunning views. This is the perfect place to retire after an adventurous day out in the countryside, or to relax and enjoy the majestic mountain vista.

Based on travel May 2014.



8

Captain Tamas Lagoon Cruise, Cook Islands from £85 per person

Tour the inner lagoon of Rarotonga with Captain Tama's, where you can snorkel with thousands of reef fish and see magnificent coral, plus enjoy a BBQ lunch on the beach on the beautiful white sands!

Based on travel 2014.

French Polynesia

French Polynesia is a luxurious destination, high on many of our travel bucket lists. With pristine white sands surrounded by turquoise waters, it's no wonder so many strive to witness this picture perfect paradise.

Situated in the South East Pacific Ocean, French Polynesia is a group of over one hundred islands and atolls spread across five large archipelagos. The perfect destination for a romantic getaway, a holiday on one of these islands allows you to escape the everyday. Whether you're looking for breathtaking scenery, somewhere to celebrate a special event, anniversary or simply a unique moment, the French Polynesian Islands offer a warm welcome.

Miles of pristine sandy beaches contrast with sparkling azure waters, whilst inland rainforests combine with beautiful mountain waterfalls on these diverse islands. With friendly locals offering warming smiles, luxurious hotels nestled in secluded bays and freshly cooked food tempting the taste buds.

However with the vast array of islands all awaiting to be explored, it is often hard to choose which of the islands to visit, or which to include on an island hopping experience...

French Polynesia

Fact File

Climate: French Polynesia experiences a tropical climate, cooled all year round by the Pacific trade winds. Split into wet and dry seasons with hot and humid weather between November and March, while dryer weather and cooler temperatures are enjoyed between April and October. Despite the two seasons, the islands are a year round destination with average temperatures of 27°C.

Currency: The Pacific Franc (XPF) is the local currency, but the Euro and USD are widely accepted.

Languages: French and Tahitian are official languages, however English is widely spoken in hotels and shops.

Time difference: -10 hours GMT

Getting there: Regular flights are available to Tahiti. Ferry services do operate between some islands, regularly crossing between Tahiti and other Society Islands such as Bora Bora and Moorea.

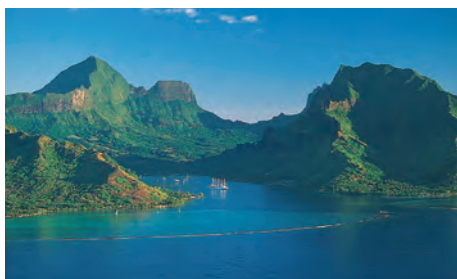


Bora Bora

Taking its name from the ancient phrase 'Pora Pora', meaning 'first born', Bora Bora is said to be the first of the French Polynesian islands to be discovered. An island that can only be described as paradise on earth, imagine pristine white beaches and five star accommodation.

As one of the world's most popular dream destinations on offer, Bora Bora is home to a range of luxurious hotels offering everything from private villas and overwater bungalows, to a tailor-made service combined with Polynesian traditions. A holiday to the idyllic island of Bora Bora is a once in a lifetime experience.

However it's not all about the luxury suites and stylish hotels in Bora Bora. With a whole host of vibrant marine life, intricate coral reefs and lush mountain greenery, the island is the perfect setting to explore. Piercing the skyline is the unmissable Mount Otemanu that towers over the landscape, overlooking the warm waters and cascading green vegetation. For the best views over the island, hike or take a 4x4 tour up the neighbouring Mount Pahia through thick jungle to enjoy panoramic views over the impressive landscape. **A**



Tahiti

The heart of the French Polynesia, Tahiti is the largest of the islands, and host to a buzz of activity and friendly locals with warming smiles. Encircled by a stunning blue lagoon, the island is host to a diverse landscape that draws in hundreds of visitors each year wanting to explore the parks and botanical gardens the island is famous for.

Whilst not home to the picturesque pristine beaches that the French Polynesia is typically known for, Tahiti has a rugged coastline with dark, volcanic sands. Perfectly combining majestic peaks and mountain ranges with deep valleys, glistening streams and peaceful waterfalls, Tahiti is a paradise second to none.

Home to an abundance of wildlife and tropical flowers, as well as most of the Polynesian's population, Tahiti has vibrant markets, pearl shops and quaint boutiques. Whilst the bustling capital of Pape'ete is a draw for many in search of some nightlife and meeting the locals, discovering the outdoor activities is a must.

With translucent waters and an abundance of marine life including gigantic manta rays, the snorkelling and diving facilities in Tahiti are world class, and one of the South Pacific's best keep secrets.

Moorea

Just off the coast of Tahiti, Moorea sits in a shallow lagoon surrounded by colourful coral reefs and crystal clear waters. Easily reached from the neighbouring island of Tahiti by plane or ferry, Moorea is a must visit for those seeking an idyllic paradise retreat with soft white sands and stylish accommodation.

Recognised for its lush vegetation, fern-softened cliffs and vertical mountains that soar high from the sea, Moorea is the island paradise we all dream of. Head to the secluded island for a laid back atmosphere, where you can enjoy a range of activities from swimming and snorkelling, to cycling and horse riding along the endless stretches of beach. Wildlife enthusiasts can even enjoy swimming alongside resident dolphins with expert guides taking out regular boat trips to catch sight of the graceful animals in their natural environment.

A true treat for the taste buds, enjoy the delicious range of food and fresh fish available, with a vast array of mouth-watering restaurants located on the edge of the lagoon. With a range of French and International cuisine to choose from, enjoy dining alfresco with an unforgettably romantic beachfront setting. Considered as being home to the world's sweetest pineapples, make sure you try a piece of the succulent fruit before departing the island.

Austravel Secrets...

"The calm lagoon waters of French Polynesia offer fantastic snorkelling – for that adrenaline rush head out on a shark or ray feeding trip"
Karen, General Manager

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: View across Hilton Bora Bora, Traditional Polynesian Canoe in Tahiti, Cooks Bay in Moorea, Intercontinental Bora Bora Resort.

TAKE ME THERE

7 NIGHTS

TAHITI AND BORA BORA

Includes 2nts Radisson Plaza Resort, 5nts Sofitel Moorea la Ora Beach Resort. Land & boat transfers.

Prices from £999 per person
SAVING up to £135 per couple

Based on travel Jul 2014

Spotlight on USA

As one of our most popular stopover destinations we thought we would share some of our expert knowledge on San Francisco, Los Angeles and Las Vegas, allowing you to break up your journey.



USA
DiscoverAmerica.com

SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco is known for its famous landmarks, the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz Island, but it is the eclectic mix of architecture, the fog, and rolling hills that makes you fall in love with the city. Public transport is perfect to get around, take a hop on/hop off sightseeing tour – the best way to get your bearings, or why not hire a battery powered bike, to head up the hills to Coit Tower, before taking a ride down world famous crooked Lombard Street. Many of the popular neighbourhoods are near the downtown area, with the largest Chinatown in the US, and Union Square for a spot of shopping. San Francisco is also known for its amazing seafood and especially the Clam Chowder at Boudin Bakery on Fisherman's Wharf. One thing is for sure you "will leave your heart in San Francisco".



Radisson Hotel Fishermans Wharf

This is the only hotel located on world renowned Fisherman's Wharf, just steps away from all of the attractions, entertainment and the historic cable cars, and is both adult and family friendly with restaurants such as Johnny Rockets and International House of Pancakes adjacent to the hotel. Plus has complimentary Wi-Fi in all rooms.

from £85 per person Based on travel Nov 2014



Kensington Park – Union Square

This hotel has historic San Francisco charm, housed in a 1925 Gothic style, with hand painted ceilings and modern artwork. Conveniently located on Post Street where you can take the cable car down to Fisherman's Wharf, with elegantly furnished rooms offering both luxury and modern day necessities, and views of either Nob Hill or Union Square and free Wi-Fi in all rooms.

from £69 per person Based on travel Nov 2014



Fairmont San Francisco

This luxurious hotel is centrally located, atop Nob Hill, and just a short cable car ride to downtown, Union Square and Fisherman's Wharf. All of the guestrooms are spacious, elegantly furnished, include flat screen TV's and iPod docking stations. Plus the hotel features two restaurants; the Tonga Room and Laurel Court Restaurant and Bar.

from £159 per person Based on travel Nov 2014

LOS ANGELES

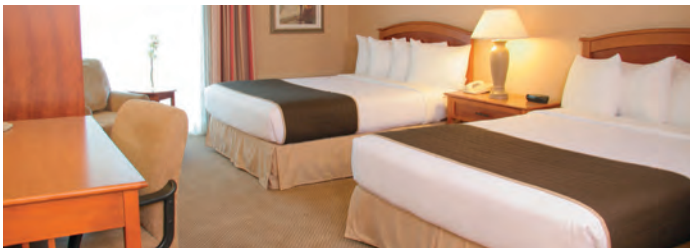
Los Angeles, the City of Angels, has it all, the perfect climate, home to Hollywood and is perfect for all ages and budgets. Whether you are looking for the glamour of Beverly Hills and Rodeo Drive, or placing your hands and feet into those of movie stars at TCL Chinese Theatre, LA is ultra modern but also a place where you can swim in the ocean and hike in the mountains all in the same day. Take a hop-on hop-off sightseeing tour that includes all of the major spots in LA, downtown LA with Olvera Street, Chinatown, Hollywood, Beverly Hills, and Santa Monica, a great way to see the city. The original Universal Studios and Disneyland are located here in Southern California. Take in a baseball game at Dodger Stadium or see a concert at the Hollywood Bowl.



Millennium Biltmore

Situated in the heart of downtown Los Angeles the Millennium Biltmore has hosted dignitaries and presidents for nearly 90 years. Set just steps away from LA Live and the Staples Center, home to the LA Lakers Basketball team, and one block away from the subway that takes you to Hollywood and Universal Studios.

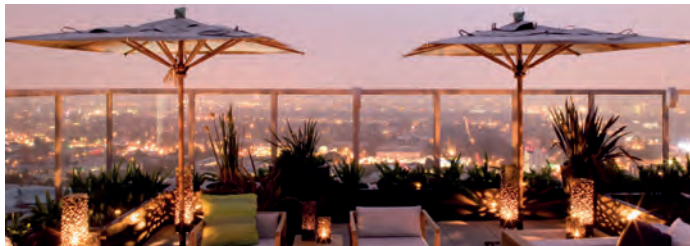
from £61 per person Based on travel Nov 2014



The Beverly Garland

Located in North Hollywood and the perfect base for visiting all that LA has to offer. It is both adult and family friendly, spend your day relaxing in the tranquil outdoor courtyard or by the pool. The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle service to Universal Studios and is close to the Hollywood Red Line Metro subway.

from £74 per person Based on travel Nov 2014



Andaz West Hollywood

Located right on Sunset Strip, this landmark hotel formerly the Riot House, is a modern and chic hotel with a mix of Hollywood glamour. Enjoy a cocktail on the rooftop sundeck as you watch the sun set over the Hollywood Hills and the bright lights of the Sunset Strip beckon.

from £114 per person Based on travel Nov 2014

LAS VEGAS

Glitz, glamour, casinos, shows, you name it you can do it. If gambling isn't your thing, there are a million and one other things to do and see in this 24 hour city that has no clocks. The hotels are like mini resorts, with restaurants, bars, all you can eat buffets, shops from souvenir to high-end designers and everything in between. No trip to Las Vegas would be complete without seeing a show, from Cirque de Soleil to Elton John at Caesar's Palace. Why not take a helicopter ride to see the Grand Canyon, a plane ride to the South Rim or take a Cowboy Trail Ride at sunset at Red Rock Canyon with a BBQ under the stars. We guarantee you will be back!



MGM Grand Hotel & Resort

One of the world's largest hotels the MGM Grand sits towards the top end of the Las Vegas Strip with its unique Lion entrance, 5 swimming pools and Las Vegas' longest lazy river. Enjoy world-class dining at Tom Colicchio Witchcraft restaurant, to the Grand Buffet there is something for all tastes and budgets.

from £48 per person Based on travel May 2014



ARIA Resort and Casino

Centrally located in the heart of the strip, this property is filled with spacious, light, public areas, endless dining options, world class shopping and technologically advanced rooms. With over 14 bars and lounges there is something to suit all tastes. Set adjacent to Crystals shopping centre offering some of the most elite stores in the world.

from £76 per person Based on travel May 2014



Paris Las Vegas

This property sits centre strip in all its glory. Be transported to France as you stroll through, choose from one of the many restaurants and bars, from Le Village Buffet, Le Creperie, outdoor dining at Bon Ami Gabi on the strip, Gordon Ramsay's Steak, or take a ride up the Eiffel Tower for dinner or just to look at the view.

from £46 per person Based on travel May 2014



A day in the life

Phillip Island is one of Australia's most scenic locations. With craggy coastlines, long sandy beaches and a wealth of wildlife, it's no wonder that thousands of visitors flock here each year.

One of the biggest attractions to Phillip Island is to witness the little penguins performing a magical parade up the beach at night. As dusk draws in and the sun begins to set over the island, the noise of baby penguins floods the area – it was this magical noise that led me to my life amid the inhabitants on Phillip Island.

For me, watching the penguins is a miraculous experience, and one not to be missed when travelling through Victoria. Seeing their white bellies as they waddle up the sands and listening to the young as they squeak in anticipation for food is an unmissable experience. However, these little creatures have not always been so lucky to have the protection of the island behind them.

I am lucky to be able to call myself one of Australia's Top Penguin Researchers, and have what many would consider a very desirable job! After completing a Bachelor of Science at Melbourne University I went to Phillip Island in 1980 to take up a three-year post-doctoral position as a Research Biologist. As the first full-time scientist at the Penguin Parade, I soon



FACT FILE

Name: Peter Dann

Job: Penguin Researcher

Location: Phillip Island, Victoria, Australia

About Phillip Island

The Nature Parks offers a range of wildlife experiences, including the Penguin Parade, Koala Conservation Centre and numerous walks.

Getting there

Phillip Island is located 140km from Melbourne, taking just under two hours to drive. Public transport is also available with regular buses and ferries onto the island.

Where to stay

Great for location, choose from either the 4 star Ramada Resort Phillip Island, or 5 star Glen Isla.

Things to do nearby

Great Ocean Road, Mornington Peninsula

moved into a neighbouring house opposite the colony. However, living alongside the inhabitants wasn't quite as idyllic as it first sounded... they were so noisy!

As any visitor can agree, these birds are very social and extremely vocal at night. During the day they're either at sea or resting in their burrows, however at night the colony comes alive. It wasn't uncommon to hear penguins braying in the middle of the night, and the ones under my house enjoyed waking me up before dawn as they left to go to sea!

So what does my job entail as a Penguin Researcher? Originally my job meant I looked at the current population of penguins and their natural habitat. Having existed for thousands of years, the penguins were becoming affected by the housing estate, along with the cars, pets, rubbish and foxes that accompanied it. With a large number of the birds being regularly injured, I decided to set up a 'hospital' in my backyard for starving, sick and wounded.

However despite my makeshift hospital, I predicted that by the mid 1990s the Penguin Parade would still be extinct, so I went to the state government with an idea to get rid of all human threats to the bird population.

With a successful case, over the next 25 years all houses in the estate, along with a motel, milk bar and even a museum, were purchased by the government and removed from the colony – resulting in a completely different Summerland Peninsula.



LITTLE PENGUIN FACT FILE

Who

Smallest species of penguin, also referred to as 'Fairy penguins' in Australia due to their tiny size.

Height

Average height between 30cm and 33cm.

Where

Coastlines of Southern Australia and New Zealand.

With such a successful renovation of the island and a flourishing revegetation process, Phillip Island Nature Park is now home to the perfect breeding environment for the iconic little penguins. Having more than doubled in population from an estimated 12,000 in 1984, to 32,000 breeding penguins today, the impressive scheme has been a true success story for the island.

As the parade and its inhabitants continued to thrive, in 1988 Phillip Island Nature Parks, a not-for-profit organisation, took over the management of the Penguin Parade. Being a self-funded organisation, the money that is raised through visitors to the park is now invested into

various conservation, research and education activities.

I can see quite clearly that the tourism has been crucial in the protection of this colony and the visitors are playing an important role in

the conservation of Phillip Island. Visitors from around the world flock to the Penguin Parade to witness the sunset return of the penguins from the sea to their burrows. It's gratifying to be able to share that experience with visitors and let them know that they're playing a role in the protection of the species on Phillip Island.

It really is one of the most magical places in the world, and I feel so lucky to be a part of it. 🐧



Alan Fletcher, Penguin Foundation Ambassador

Did you know?

Dr Karl (Neighbours) Alan Fletcher and Kylie Minogue are ambassadors

The little penguins commemorated the 25th anniversary of the TV series, Neighbours, by welcoming actor Alan Fletcher as a Penguin Foundation ambassador. Fletcher is known the world over for his role as Dr Karl Kennedy in Neighbours. "I am excited to help the Penguin Foundation protect these wonderful Australian icons," Fletcher joins former Neighbours cast member Kylie Minogue, who is also a Penguin Foundation ambassador, in helping the Penguin Foundation continue its important work.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Little Penguins, Penguin researcher Peter Dann, parade of penguins at dusk on Phillip Island

TAKE ME THERE


PHILIP ISLAND PENGUIN PARADE DAY TOUR

Visit the Koala Conservation Centre, walk amongst treetops and enjoy spectacular views over Mornington Peninsula before arriving at the beach in time to watch the sunset and Little Penguins make their way ashore.

Prices from £80 per person

Based on travel Jun 2014

AVIS NEW ZEALAND



One of the best ways to explore the diverse scenery of New Zealand is by car. Allowing you the freedom to discover the jaw dropping landscapes at your own pace, enjoy meandering through mountain ranges and lakeside towns, contrasted by impressive glaciers and fiordlands. With picture perfect views around every corner, enjoy endless photo opportunities as you travel through the stunning country.



Thanks to the lack of traffic congestion, clear road signs and driving on the left hand side, self drives around New Zealand are easy. With handpicked itineraries, Austravel can help you to plan your perfect tour, allowing you to sit back and relax behind the wheel.


Austravel and Avis work closely together to craft essential itineraries with pre-booked accommodation to save you time and worry. One of our favourite tours is the South Island Wanderer, a 12 day self drive allowing you to take your time discovering the delights of the Island fully.

Start off in Christchurch, soaking up the English atmosphere with beautiful architecture, before heading north to Kaikoura; one of the only places in the world where you can spot whales all-year-round. Pass through vineyards, the stunning Marlborough Sounds, and towards Abel Tasman National Park where you can take a cruise or kayak around the harbour. As day four commences, work your way from Nelson through scenic reserves to Hokitika and onto Franz Josef – home to mountain peaks and impressive glaciers.

Adrenaline seekers will be pleased to hear that day seven is at leisure in Queenstown. Named as the adventure capital of New Zealand, try out the range of activities on offer from jet boating and bungee jumping, to the more peaceful cruises and scenic 4 wheel-drive tours. Fringed by mountain ranges and lakes, enjoy the stunning drive to Te Anau allowing you the chance to witness the infamous Milford Sound. Surrounded by towering mountains, snow capped peaks and tropical rainforests, enjoy a cruise on the peaceful waters as you sit back in awe of the mesmerising landscape.

An abundance of wildlife awaits you in Dunedin on day 10, with plenty of time to walk around the town and see the flora and fauna that awaits on the spectacular Otago Peninsula. Watch out for the royal albatross and the colonies of yellow-eyed penguins that inhabit the peninsula before finally working your way back to Christchurch to return your car.

If the idea of self drive appeals, yet you would like a little more freedom to create your own itinerary, then our Travel Designers can help you to craft your own route. Simply give them a call to chat through your ideas and let them help you to make it happen. We don't just go there, we know there.

Avis Includes: All tours come complete with a free backpack containing detailed maps, day by day driving instructions and tips for where to find the best photo opportunities. 

TAKE ME THERE

12 DAYS

SOUTH ISLAND WANDERER SELF DRIVE

Includes 12 days car hire and 11 nights accommodation

Prices from £695 per person

SAVING up to £100 per couple

Book before 31 Mar 2014. Based on travel Jun 2014

Why choose Austravel?

Austravel are the leading specialist for holidays to Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific, and have been advising customers on these incredible destinations since 1977. Our dedicated team of Travel Designers have all travelled and experienced these amazing destinations first hand, enabling them to offer you the expert advice you need. Here are just some of the reasons people choose to book with Austravel:

EXPERTISE:

Being Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific specialists you can rest assured that our teams will use their intimate knowledge of these wonderful countries to best suit your preferences and budget. Offering an unbiased, informed opinion our Travel Designers are passionate about travel.

BEST PRICES:

We have worked hard to build special relationships with all of our partners and we continue to work hard in a commitment to providing you with the very best prices; our continued success means we have a significant buying power allowing us to be totally confident in offering you complete value for money.

FINANCIAL SECURITY:

Book with complete confidence in us and rest assured that you're safe in our hands. We are ABTA, ATOL and IATA bonded, and because we can book all of your travel arrangements in one place, you have the financial security of knowing you will not be left stranded should anything not go to plan.

ONE-STOP SHOP:

We'll take care of everything from great value flights, hotels, car and motorhome hire to escorted touring, day tours, worldwide stopovers, Australian Visas and Travel Insurance. We can even book your airport hotels and parking before you go!



To book call **0808 252 5894** or for more information visit austravel.com

What next?

Start planning your own adventure down under!

LATEST NEWS & OFFERS

Be the first to hear about our latest great offers or amazing sales, be inspired about new places to visit and receive expert tips on how to make you adventure extra special.


ORDER OUR BROCHURE

Head to our website to order a copy of our latest brochures, or for more inspiration simply browse our website which is full of recommended itineraries, destination and hotel details and more.

FREE ENDEAVOUR APP

Our Endeavour app brings you even more articles, latest news on Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific as well as videos of these wonderful locations. Just search for Endeavour...enjoy!



An underwater photograph of a coral reef. In the center, a large sea turtle with a brown and orange patterned shell swims towards the viewer. To the right, a diver in a blue shirt and yellow fins is taking a photo with a camera. Several smaller fish, including striped ones, are swimming around. In the background, another diver is visible. The water is clear and blue.

THE ONLY AQUARIUM VISIBLE FROM SPACE

Sydney & Reef from £349 per person
Saving up to £100 per couple

Start your holiday in Sydney, with its iconic Harbour Bridge and Opera House, take a Cruise around the Harbour or enjoy a stroll through the Royal Botanic Gardens. You can explore the nearby Blue Mountains, or experience the wonderful wineries in the picturesque Hunter Valley. Fly up the East coast to Cairns, an ideal location to discover the Tropical North, with the Daintree National Park close by and the Great Barrier Reef just a short boat trip away.

Visit www.austravel.com for more great deals.

THERE'S NOTHING
LIKE AUSTRALIA

