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CELEBRATING
25 years
OF INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEYS

the talking drum

Autumn 2011



Book early to avoid disappointment - call us today on 1300 363 302 or ask your travel agent.

EMBRACING THE SPIRIT OF TRAVEL

Welcome to our Autumn newsletter for 2011 featuring some of our most inspirational destinations. Discover unique travel experiences which bring rich rewards and the freedom of wide-open spaces.

In this issue we showcase the exclusive tented camps and lodges of safari operator Etua Enkop, located in Kenya's prime wildlife-viewing areas. Page 3 journeys to Zambia's famous South Luangwa National Park and the wonderful eco-camps of Norman Carr Safaris.

Swap lions for grizzly and polar bears and head to the wilds of Canada, or visit an untouched wilderness of a different kind and fly to the Great White Continent of Antarctica.

Accompanying this issue are two special destination supplements; one highlighting South Africa and the other South America. If you would like more details on any of our featured travel experiences please call 1300 363 302 and speak to one of our knowledgeable travel consultants.



ANTARCTIC WONDERLAND

Classic Antarctica Air-Cruise

7 days/ 6 nights Departs ex Punta Arenas, Chile

This one-of-a-kind Antarctica journey takes you straight to the action with a flight from Punta Arenas in Chile to King George Island in the heart of Antarctica's pristine wildlife viewing area, eliminating the often turbulent crossing of the Drake Passage.

Step aboard the comfortable Ocean Nova, built in 1992 and regularly refurbished. Her ice-strengthened hull is perfect for navigating through the floe and brash ice filled waters of Antarctica. Travelling with just 62 fellow passengers on this 6 night fly-cruise you will be accommodated in modern outside cabins with private facilities. Your time onboard will be spent sailing along ice-filled fjords, between spectacular icebergs, visiting locations such as Livingston Island, Port Lockroy, Peterman Island,

Paradise Island, Cuverville, Deception Island and the beautiful Lemaire Channel. Regular shore excursions are conducted via Zodiac boat, accompanied at all times by Ocean Nova's highly trained expedition staff. You will observe countless wildlife throughout your journey including sea birds, penguins, seals and whales, and informative onboard lectures will give you an insight into the daily grind of Antarctic life. This 7 day, 6 night classic itinerary includes: 1 night in Punta Arenas, 5 nights aboard Ocean Nova with all meals and drinks and scheduled activities and return flights from Punta Arenas to King George Island. Cruise departs 13, 18, 23, 28 December 2011 and 02, 07, 12 January 2012. Prices start from \$10,066 per person in a triple shared cabin or \$11,185 per person in a twin shared cabin.

WILD AFRICA

Zambia's reputation as one of the last truly wild parts of Africa is epitomised by the small private safari camps of Norman Carr Safaris. Secluded within the beautiful South Luangwa National Park these permanent lodges and seasonal bush camps are a perfect escape from the modern world. Well trained guides escort guests on game drives, night drives and walks through the wilderness, searching for big game like lion and elephant. Or embark on one of the walking safaris made famous by Conservationist and Founder the late Norman Carr in the 1950's. With your guide you will travel from camp to camp on foot, tracking game along the way.

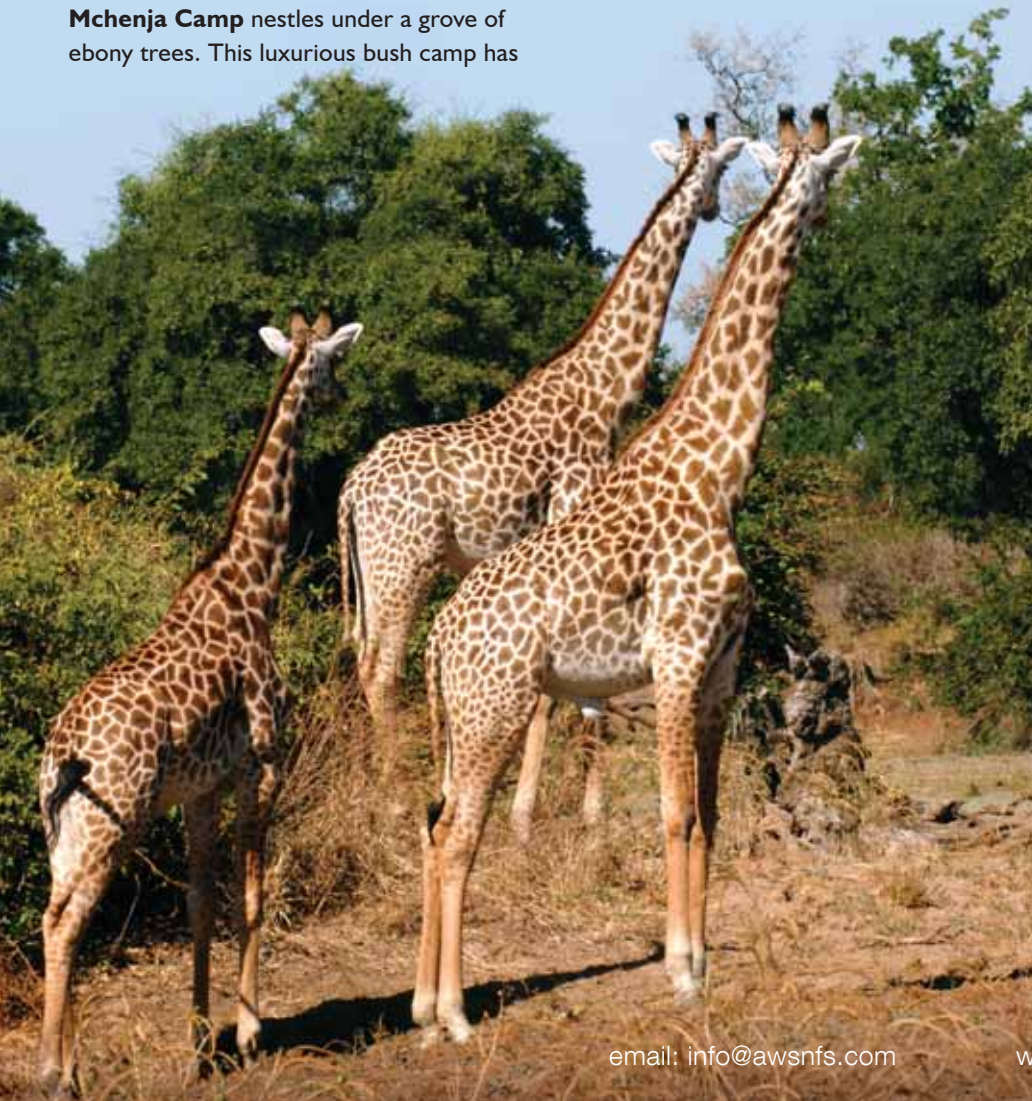
Kapani is a permanent safari lodge which offers elegant accommodation on the banks of an ox-bow lagoon on the Luangwa River. Guests are accommodated in 8 spacious suites and 2 lagoon houses. Dining is al fresco on the terrace, by the swimming pool or on the spacious deck overlooking the lagoon. The area is rich in game with animals often seen close to the camp.

Mchenja Camp nestles under a grove of ebony trees. This luxurious bush camp has

4 stylish tents, each with thatched roof and private deck. There is a central lounge/dining area and small plunge pool. **Kakuli** is a seasonal bush camp with 5 spacious tents at the confluence of the Luwi and Luangwa rivers and famous for predators. Night game drives are the speciality here.

Luwi & Nsolo Bush Camps are seasonal camps in an isolated area of the park and ideal for walking safaris. Luwi Bush Camp is shaded by huge mahogany trees and overlooks a permanent lagoon full of hippo and crocodiles. This rustic camp has 4 guest huts, a small bar and meals are served outside under the trees. Three hours' walk away is charming Nsolo Bush Camp on the Luwi sand river. Nsolo accommodates just 8 guests in 4 well furnished thatched chalets on raised platforms. The area is renowned for its lion population which uses the semi-dry riverbed as its main thoroughfare.

Norman Carr Safaris also offer adventurous guests the chance to sleep-out under the stars with just a bedroll and mosquito net, escorted by a top guide and scout. This can be included as part of any walking safari.



INTOXICATING KENYA

As you travel the great plains of Kenya and breathe the clean rarefied air you will be intoxicated by the smells of the bush and the sights and sounds of the myriads of birds and animals. Atua Enkop properties are small luxury camps which retain the charm and authenticity of traditional safari camps whilst not compromising on creature comforts. They are situated in some of the best locations for gameviewing, and surrounded by the peace and beauty of the wilderness.



Elephant Bedroom

ELEPHANT BEDROOM

Set on the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro River in northern Kenya's semi-arid Samburu National Reserve, Elephant Bedroom is surrounded by doum palms and other beautiful indigenous trees and shrubs. This exclusive camp has just 12 luxury tents furnished in rustic African style with comfortable beds and ensuite bathrooms. Relax with a drink in the cosy lounge after your game drives and enjoy candle-lit dinners in the dining room or under the stars. Samburu is known for its big game as well as endemic species such as Beisa oryx, Grevy's zebra, gerenuk antelope and Somali ostrich. Elephant, lion and the solitary leopard are regular visitors around the camp.





Mbweha Camp

MBWEHA CAMP

Situated in the Great Rift Valley next to famous Lake Nakuru National Park, this picturesque camp is surrounded by indigenous yellow barked acacia and the magnificent Candelabra Euphorbia cactus. Mbweha offers ten spacious guest cottages built from lava stone with cool thatched roofs, a central thatched dining room and sunken bar. Game drives are conducted into the park which is renowned for its millions of pink flamingos and pelicans, as well as lion, leopard, rhino, hyena and hippo. The camp lies within a private 6400 acre conservancy so activities include bush walks, night game drives, bush picnics and optional hot air ballooning.

TIPILIKWANI CAMP

The rolling plains of the Masai Mara are famous for the wildebeest and zebra migration which takes place every year between July and October. Situated on the Talek River exclusive Tipilikwani Camp holds a prime position within this wildlife paradise. Guests are accommodated in 20 luxuriously appointed riverfront tents with private terrace. The central areas feature an open sided lounge/dining room with an elegant yet relaxed atmosphere and views over the river. Expert local safari guides will take you gameviewing in 4WD open sided safari vehicles. Other activities include night game drives, bush walks, picnics and cultural visits.



Mara Ngenche

MARA NGENCHE

This small, exclusive camp is secluded within a private concession next to the Masai Mara Game Reserve. It has a spectacular location at the confluence of the Mara and Talek Rivers which teem with hippos and crocodiles. The camp offers 6 luxury guest tents with king size bed, ensuite bathroom, dressing area, outdoor shower and private terrace with views of the Mara River. Enjoy delicious meals in the spacious, open-sided dining room or on your own verandah. Take morning and afternoon game drives by open-sided 4WD accompanied by expert guides. Bush picnics, sundowners and cultural visits are also offered.



Tipilikwani Camp

**Amazing Companion Offer
Spectacular Kenya
2ND PERSON SAVES 50%**

Take advantage of our incredible Companion Offer when you and a friend travel together on our 7 day/6 night 'Spectacular Kenya' tour. The tour combines beautiful Elephant Bedroom camp in Samburu with the new Mara Ngenche camp on the Mara River. The itinerary includes round trip flights from Nairobi to the game parks, transfers, full board accommodation, drinks (house wines, local beers & soft drinks), shared game drives in open 4WD safari vehicles, park entry fees and a visit to a Maasai village. The tour costs \$5562 for the first traveller and \$2781 for the second traveller between 01 Feb-30 Jun and 01 Nov-15 Dec. Prices outside these date ranges are available on request.

For more details on these camps and our Companion Offer please call us on 1300 363 302 or ask your travel agent.

ESCORTED GRO

GRIZZLIES & POLAR BEARS

Canada's Ultimate Wildlife Experience
15 day/14 night Escorted Group Tour
Departs 09 October 2011 ex Australia
Tour cost from \$16424* p.p. twin share

*Tour cost based on departure ex Sydney. Prices from other capital cities available on request.

Majestic giants of the wild, bears have always captivated and intrigued us. In First Nations and Native American culture grizzly bears are seen as the protectors and a symbol for strength and courage. In Inuit culture Nanook (the Inuit word for Polar Bear) is the master of all bears who decides a hunter's worthiness. Travel into the North American wilderness on our escorted group tour "Grizzlies & Polar Bears" with our Canada expert Brenda Parrish and see these sacred creatures in their natural habitats.

Travelling from Australia via Vancouver your first stop will be the charming Great Bear Lodge in the heart of the Great Bear

Rainforest. This eco-friendly floating lodge is nestled at the mouth of a pristine salmon river. Float silently by boat through the river estuary and observe grizzly bears as they come out to feed. Continue on to the "Polar Bear Capital of the World", Hudson Bay in Churchill. View polar bears in comfort from specially designed all-terrain vehicles called Tundra Buggies. Observe the bears as they wait for the bay to freeze so they can venture out to hunt.

Grizzlies & Polar Bears costs \$16,536 per person twin share ex Melbourne and \$16,424 ex Sydney. We can take a maximum of just 10 participants, so call to reserve your place now. Please contact Brenda or any of our Canada specialists on (03) 9249 3777 or 1300 363 302 for more details.

YOUR ESCORT

Hailing from British Columbia, Brenda Parrish has traversed the length and breadth of Canada including the Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec and all of the Maritimes. Her adventures have taken her salmon fishing off the coast of Vancouver Island, hiking through fields of wildflowers, canoeing in Algonquin Park, and into the territory of grizzlies, black and polar bears. Most recently, Brenda sailed Alaska's famed Inside Passage.



UP TOURS 2011

FESTIVALS OF THE LAST SHANGRI-LA

Bhutan – The Land of the Thunder Dragon
15 day/14 night Escorted Group Tour
Departs 05 November 2011 ex Sydney*
Tour cost from \$7096* p.p. twin share

*Tour cost based on 7 clients travelling with NFS tour escort Jean Maxwell on departure ex Sydney.
Prices from other capital cities available on request.

Nestled in the eastern Himalayas between Tibet and India, Bhutan is a mountainous Buddhist kingdom where time seems to have stood still. Religion permeates every aspect of life and fluttering prayer flags, saffron-robed monks and lonely hilltop monasteries exist in harmony with virgin forests and alpine meadows. Having only opened its doors to tourism in 1974, few people have experienced its breathtaking scenery or gentle natured people.

For a real insight into the culture of this magical kingdom join our 15 day escorted group tour *Festivals of the Last Shangri-La*. Accompanied by Natural Focus Safaris tour escort Jean Maxwell, you will journey into the beautiful region of Bumthang, Bhutan's

spiritual heartland. Beginning in the lovely Paro Valley with its spectacularly-located Taktsang Monastery, this tour explores Thimphu, the historical winter capital Punakha and Phobjikha Valley, winter home of the Black-Necked Cranes. Continuing eastwards to the Bumthang Valley, you will witness the colourful dances and religious pageantry of one of Bhutan's most important festivals, the Jambay Lhakhang Drup Festival at 7th century Jambay Lhakhang Monastery, and also the Prakar Tsechu set in a remote village. This will be a special experience as you stroll amongst the colourful masked dancers and the equally colourful audience dressed in their finest ghos and kiras. For further details please call (03) 9249 3777 or 1300 363 302.

YOUR ESCORT

Jean Maxwell is one of our resident specialists on the Indian subcontinent and has previously led tours to Kashmir, Ladakh, Rajasthan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. A passion for the exotic, her most recent trip took her to Himachal Pradesh in the remote foothills of the Himalayas. A 'people person' and keen photographer, Jean looks forward to discovering the wonderful people and extraordinary scenery of Bhutan with you.





EGYPT - A NEW BEGINNING

Since the end of the historic and mainly peaceful popular uprising that saw the resignation of President Mubarak, Egypt has started a new phase in her long and eventful history. Peace has returned to the streets of Cairo and Alexandria and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have downgraded their travel advice from their previous high level warning. The UK have lifted their travel warning for the country. Our ground operator in Egypt has advised that all tourist sites are now open and tours and cruises are operating normally. We hope that the country will soon achieve a peaceful transition to democracy.

SONESTA NILE CRUISE SPECIAL - SAVE 20%



Sonesta Nile Cruises is offering an amazing early bird promotion for the next summer season. All new bookings received before 15 Apr 2011 for the following cruises will earn a 20% discount: cruises starting on 29 Apr up until 30 Sep 2011 on the Sonesta Nile Goddess or Star Goddess; and cruises starting from 30 Apr until 01 Oct 2011 for the Moon Goddess.

Important conditions: This promotion is only for new bookings. Bookings must be paid in full by 15 Apr 2011; No modifications or cancellations accepted after 15 Apr 2011. For more details please contact our office.



INCREDIBLE INDIA 2 FOR 1 OFFER LAND ONLY EX DELHI

GOLDEN TRIANGLE

6 Days/5 nights departs ex Delhi
Tour cost twin share

First Person Pays: \$1752*

Second Person: FREE!

*Conditions apply

Natural Focus Safaris is excited to launch an incredible "2 for 1" offer available for travel between 16 Apr - 31 Aug 2011. Take a companion on our 6 day/5 night Delhi-Jaipur-Agra tour and they will travel on this tour absolutely free! This famous Golden Triangle includes the historic sites of Old and New Delhi, the architectural treasures of Jaipur and Agra, home to the Taj Mahal, considered by many to be the most beautiful building in the world.

CONSERVATION UPDATE

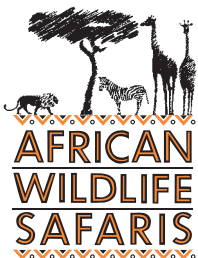
GIVE THEM FREEDOM!

Our latest donation has gone to a very special cause - the "Freedom Fence" project for Grauer or Lowland Gorillas rescued from armed conflict or poachers in the Congo. The fence is being built at the Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education (GRACE) center initiated by the Diane Fossey Gorilla Fund, at the urging of the Congolese National Park Service. The fence will give young gorillas room to move around the 350 acres of forest within the centre and learn vital social and survival skills. African Wildlife Safaris have matched dollar for dollar donations made by our clients and donated US \$7731.24 to the Diane Fossey Fund for the fence. For more information see www.gorillafund.org

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