



After a battering from the storms of early March which brought down our power and phone lines, we were glad of the early Easter break. Now, looking towards summer, we have a wide variety of trips to tempt you – from boat trips in the Antarctic and dog sledding in Mongolia to riding in Rajasthan.

As many of you have experienced, we have strong organisational skills and a fantastic network of trustworthy, reliable partners all over the world which enables us to pull together what might seem like a complicated itinerary with relative ease. Our Travel Snippets section on the back page gives an idea of just some of the trips we have organised, but we are always looking to extend our horizons and don't mind researching a new area for an old friend – so do call us if you think we could be of service. Interestingly, we are often asked how our clients find us. We rarely advertise and nearly all our clients are repeat or referral bookings – hopefully a testament to the way we look after you.

Meanwhile, I have just come back from a fantastic trip to Chile – more about it in our next issue.

Fiona Brijnath
Far Frontiers Travel

telephone & fax

01837 840640

email

fiona@farfrontiers.com

website

www.farfrontiers.com

brochure

Call us for a copy of our 'show-case' brochure

Far Frontiers Travel Limited
Ninestone, South Zeal
Devon EX20 2PZ

CONTACT US



far frontiers

tailored travel for today's explorer.

MOROCCO'S RIADS

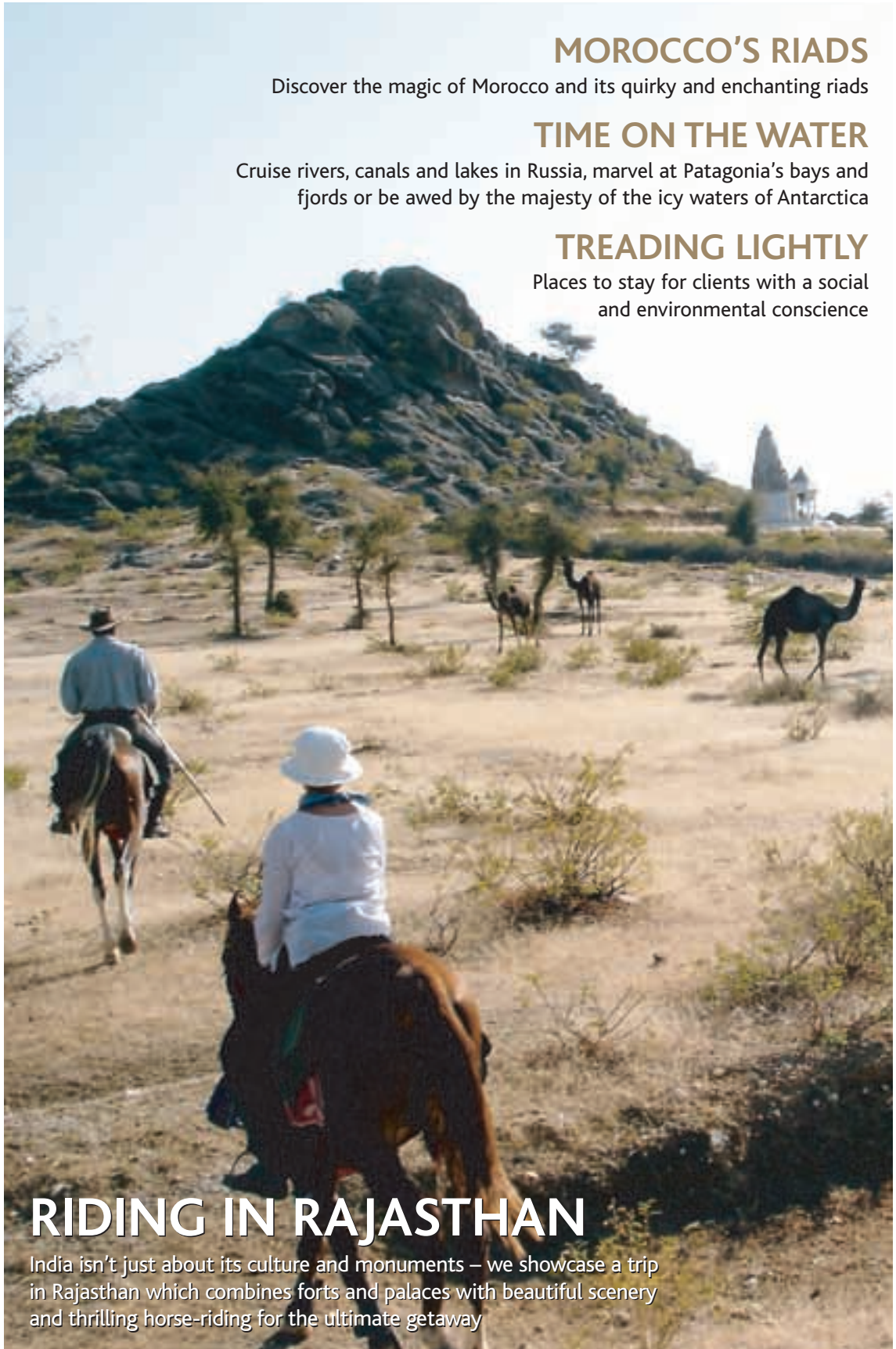
Discover the magic of Morocco and its quirky and enchanting riads

TIME ON THE WATER

Cruise rivers, canals and lakes in Russia, marvel at Patagonia's bays and fjords or be awed by the majesty of the icy waters of Antarctica

TREADING LIGHTLY

Places to stay for clients with a social and environmental conscience



RIDING IN RAJASTHAN

India isn't just about its culture and monuments – we showcase a trip in Rajasthan which combines forts and palaces with beautiful scenery and thrilling horse-riding for the ultimate getaway



Morocco is the perfect destination for a long weekend, a self-drive holiday, a coastal break, a desert experience or a revitalizing trek.



Whatever your plans, we recommend you stay in one of Morocco's many stylish 'riads', or traditional houses. The word riad derives from the Arabic 'ryad', describing a house or palace with an interior garden. The inward focus of the dwelling with its central garden and lack of large windows on the exterior clay or mud brick walls allowed for family privacy and protection from the weather. Although the style of riads has changed over the years, the basic form is still the same and many renovated riads have been transformed into restaurants or boutique places to stay, providing a peaceful break from the hustle and bustle outside. We have a number of favourites that we would like to share with you.

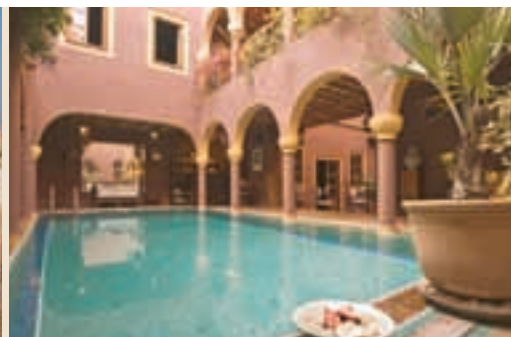
ATLAS MOUNTAINS

The Kasbah du Toubkal is situated at 1800 metres at the foot of **Jbel Toubkal**, the highest peak in North Africa. It offers true Berber hospitality in a variety of rooms including the spectacular Garden Suite with its 12 metre glass wall looking up to Jbel Toubkal. There are also Berber Salons with gallery sleeping areas for families and small groups. Although only an hour's drive from **Marrakech**, the peace and seclusion are so complete that the city seems a million miles away. Explore the village, nearby hamlets and the surrounding mountain landscape, on foot or by mule, or just relax on the terrace or in the hammam (steam bath).



ESSAOUIRA

Dar Mimosa offers superb accommodation set in an extraordinary garden. Built and run by its French owner, who is often to be found cooking guest's dinners, this magical little hotel offers just four two-roomed villas with private gardens, and four double bedrooms, so there are never more than 24 guests at any one time. The décor is memorable from its striking blue and white tiled bathrooms to its ochre and blue walls, traditional furniture and antique paintings. Lunch may be taken around the mosaic tiled pool while dinners are served in one of the many private salons dotted throughout the main house or in your private villa. **Essaouira's** busy port is a mere 2 km away.



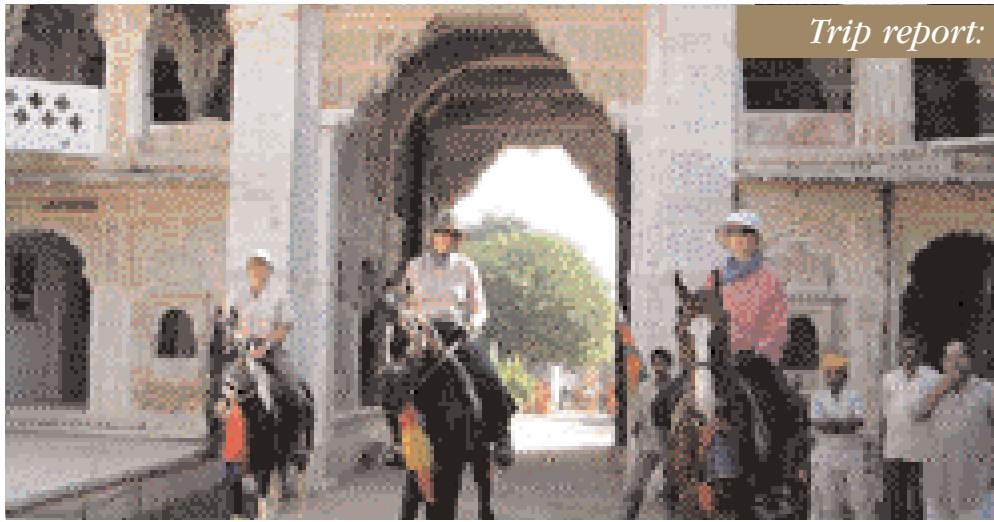
MARRAKECH

Dar Les Cigognes, meaning 'house of storks', stands opposite the gates of the **Royal Palace**. A former merchant's home, it has been recreated by renowned architect Charles Boccara into an oasis of luxury and calm. Each of the 11 bedrooms and en suite bathrooms is different and draws on the rich cultural heritage of Moorish art and décor. An attractive courtyard with fruit trees and a fountain provides a peaceful place for relaxation.

Riad Noga is just ten minutes' walk from the main square, tucked away down a side street in the heart of the old medina. It offers seven richly decorated double rooms with en suite bathrooms situated around a central courtyard with tumbling bougainvillea and orange trees. The dining room has a vaulted ceiling and there is a panoramic view from the roof terrace. The green tiled swimming pool is solar-heated and there are plenty of private terraces for reading or sunbathing.

FEZ

La Maison Bleue was built in 1915 and has 12 rooms and suites and a delightful roof terrace situated just a few minutes' walk from the busy souks of Fez. The rooms are packed with exquisite antiques and have mosaic tiled floors, chandeliers, luxurious curtains, brocaded sofas and four-poster beds. Dinner is a memorable four-course extravaganza with musicians, candlelight and fountains! The rooms have some modern luxuries – television, hairdryer and mini bar, but otherwise are delightfully old-fashioned.



Trip report:

Julia Loxton and Diana Fisher



RIDING *in Rajasthan*



Last year, **Julia Loxton** and her sister **Diana Fisher** enjoyed one of our personalised riding itineraries in **India**, joining a small group. This trip would be perfect for a family holiday or a group of friends looking to do something different but we should point out that it is not for the novice rider! We have a wealth of experience in India and regularly tailor holidays not just to **Rajasthan**, but to the lush green and tranquil South, to the rugged moonscape of **Ladakh** in the far north, to the old British hill stations and to **Sikkim** and **Darjeeling** in combination with **Bhutan**. All itineraries are tailored to the individual using our network of small special historic palace hotels, old family houses and individual boutique hotels. If you are considering a visit to India, why not call us to see what we can do for you?

"My sister Di and I had been discussing another trip to India for some time, and we had decided that we wanted to go to Rajasthan and to combine this with a horse riding safari as we are both keen riders. After many phone calls to Fiona at Far Frontiers Travel, she sorted out an itinerary for us which combined all the elements we wanted.

We flew to Delhi and spent a couple of days there visiting wonderful sights, including the old town, Qutb Minar, Purana Quila and the Lodhi Gardens – there are so many fascinating places to visit, it's a good idea to do plenty of background reading so you can pinpoint where to go.

Our next stop was Agra and the Taj Mahal, which I was pretty ambivalent about visiting. I thought I'd seen so many photos of it, there was no need to go in person. I was so wrong! It's simply the most beautiful building I've ever seen, and no photographs do it justice. It's a must see, and I'm so grateful to Fiona for stressing we should go.

We spent a lovely night at the Laxmi Vilas Palace at Bharatpur, visiting the nature reserve early the following morning with a young, knowledgeable and enthusiastic guide, where we saw (among many

TREADING *lightly*



» Mozambique«

Quirimbas Archipelago

Vamizi Island

Vamizi Island in the Quirimbas Archipelago off the coast of northern Mozambique is part of the Maluane conservation area, one of the last pristine marine wilderness areas left in the world. The aim is to keep it that way through a combination of scientifically-based conservation projects and sustainable, low impact tourism.

Vamizi Island Lodge was the first lodge to open as part of the Maluane project. One of Maluane's co-founders, Dr Julia Garnier, is a renowned wildlife vet who worked with the London Zoological Society and the local communities to develop projects including turtle conservation, coral and fish

If you are keen to help reduce the environmental impact of travel and tourism and enable local communities to remain vibrant and self-supporting, you may be interested in the following suggestions for 'sustainable' places to stay.

inventories and monitoring, wildlife surveys, community education and training of Mozambican students in conservation management.

This is an exquisite destination, where you step out of beautifully appointed beach villas into a world of powder sands, virginal reefs and secret coves. There are just ten fabulous beach houses, two of which have been designed with double suites to provide exclusive seclusion for families or friends. The main dining room, bar and sitting room stretch along the beach and have open sitting areas and secluded corners and a sunset bar is located close to the water's edge. The ocean is Vamizi's main larder and this is reflected in the cuisine which uses the freshest local ingredients with Mediterranean and Indian Ocean flavours.

» what to do « Vamizi offers snorkelling, diving, big game fishing, salt-water fly-fishing, mountain bike

other creatures) a large python coiled at the side of the track, probably waiting for us all to move away so it could cross!

The **Pushkar Camel Fair** was one of the highlights of our trip, and it was such fun – as we neared the town more and more trucks and buses were heading there, often filled with Rajasthani girls in their gloriously vivid clothes and wonderful jewellery, all looking so excited and waving to us as we passed.

Camels, horses and cattle filled the hillsides at the edge of the town as far as the eye could see, and it looked like a scene from the Bible. The camels were decorated with geometric designs on their coats, some clipped on and some painted, and many had embroidered mirror-work cloths under their saddles. There were huge camels, baby camels, led, tethered, ridden, pulling carts, or lying down fast asleep – we just wandered, taking endless photographs, and scarcely able to believe what we were seeing!

In the town, people thronged through the streets, past stalls selling food of all descriptions, camel and horse saddlery, wonderful embroidered and mirror-worked bags and hangings – which I remembered from the 1960's and the hippie era, and never knew it all hailed from Rajasthan! In the middle of it all a big wheel

turned slowly and majestically, and at the lake in the centre of Pushkar, Di and I had a Hindu blessing.

We saw one party of riders arrive at the fair looking terrified as their horses went absolutely crazy when they approached all the noise, and, as we realised later, the safari horses are all stallions and there were a lot of mares tethered nearby. Di and I gave each other a very apprehensive look, and both of us turned ashen with terror!

The next day we met the owner and operator of the horse safari and his horses, which were small, fit and contentedly munching their feed whilst tethered at the back of our tented camp. Within a couple of minutes of riding them we realised they were a joy – willing, comfortable and totally bombproof, even when lorries tore past with horns blaring inches from us. Many unflattering comparisons were made to our own horses at home!

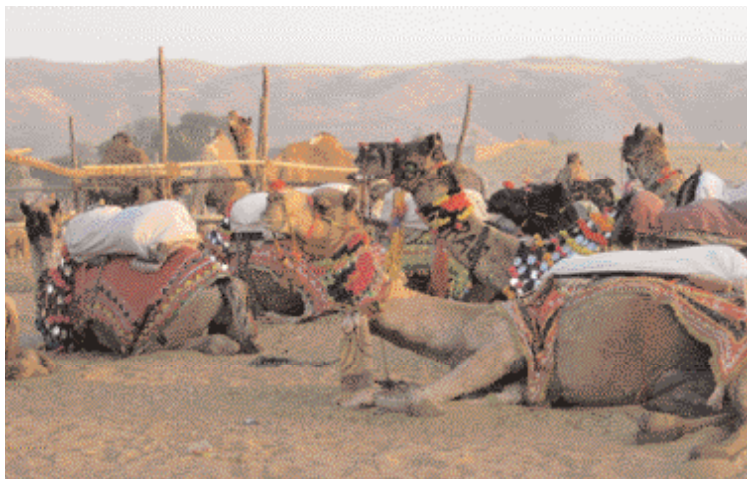
The riding was wonderful, through timeless villages with smiling, waving inhabitants, across semi desert, where once we saw an old man shepherding a herd of camel ahead of us, across fields, walking and cantering fast on our agile and sure-footed horses.

We stopped for lunch each day, sometimes in a farmyard, other times in a field, by a temple, or at

the side of a lake where the fishing nets were being pulled in by teams of boys, and goats were being tended by a woman and her young son. We were always found shade under a tree, a delicious freshly-cooked lunch was waiting, with bowls of hot soup to start with, and beer, lemonade or water to drink. The horses were whisked away from us to be watered, fed, groomed and rested while we ate and magically reappeared, saddled and ready when we had finished.

We stayed in different palaces each night, where the kindness and hospitality of our hosts was unending. Some of the palaces had been turned into hotels, some were beginning to take guests, and all were vast buildings full of history and atmosphere. It was all such fun, and really well-organised. We left the safari not exhausted and stiff as we'd imagined, but fit as fleas and raring to go – not bad for a couple of fifty-somethings!

We finished our lovely trip at the **Lake Palace** hotel, **Udaipur**, in total comfort and luxury with some jewellery shopping thrown in, but no sign of James Bond! *Thank you Fiona for organising such a great holiday brilliantly, and I can't wait to go back to India again."*



trails, birdwalks, dhow cruises and private picnics, all in an environment of uncompromising quality, understated elegance and barefoot luxury.

We suggest you stay for five or more nights to make your trip worthwhile. This would make an ideal and relaxing extension to a holiday in Botswana, Kenya or South Africa.

The Green Hotel

Built for **Mysore's** princesses, the historic **Chittaranjan Palace** has been lovingly restored as a small hotel and operates as a model of sustainable tourism. Set in extensive gardens, with formal lawns and shaded pergolas and fringed by majestic trees, the hotel is an oasis of calm, with friendly staff and a restful, creative atmosphere. Much-favoured by artists and writers, guests have been known to come for a night and stay for a month!

The **Green Hotel** was set up by a UK charity, the Charities Advisory Trust, and all the profits are distributed to charitable and environmental projects in India. Its mission is to be a good employer, to offer equal and fair opportunities and to train staff and develop their potential. In preserving the building, the renovation, furniture and fittings made use of traditional Indian crafts. Energy saving and environmentally aware practices are used wherever possible.



» South India «

Mysore

» what to do « Mysore, the charming town immortalised by RK Narayan in his Malgudi novels, provides an excellent base from which to tour South India. The **Western Ghats**, the coffee plantations of **Coorg**, the game reserves of the **Nilgris** and the **Ooty** hill station are all within a few hours' drive. If you fancy going to the races, **Mysore Turf Club** has one of the prettiest race tracks in the world –

with its flower beds and backdrop of the **Chamundi Hill**. When it is not being used for races, the track becomes a nine-hole golf course! If racing doesn't appeal you can learn yoga, take a massage, or buy locally-woven crepe de chine, silk and cotton and get a local tailor to copy your favourite garments.



time on the WATER

» MY Sarsen «

» when to go « November/December 2008



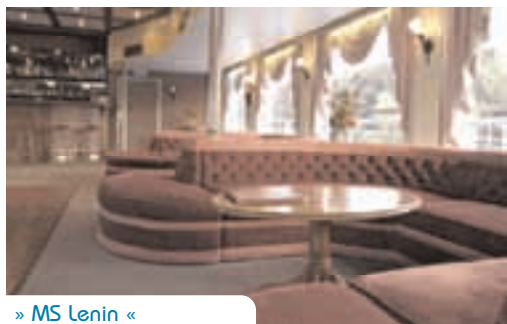
and most inhospitable, yet fragile, continent. You would depart on 30 November 2008 from **Punte Arenas** in **Chile** with a flight of a little more than three-hours over **Cape Horn** and the mythical waters of the **Drake Passage**, to **King George Island**, the largest island of the **South Shetlands**. Here at the gates of the 'White Continent' it is a six-day navigation along the **Antarctic Peninsular** visiting the most wonderful wildlife sites and enjoying superb lectures en route.

Antarctica XXI

If you have always wanted to visit **Antarctica**, 2008 might be the year to fulfil your dream. Antarctica XXI is a very special fly-cruise trip on a BAe 146-200 aircraft and the **MY Sarsen**, a private vessel with all the amenities for a top level trip. Accommodating 12 passengers, she would be perfect for a private party or family group wanting something completely out of the ordinary.

Travel to one of the most remote places on earth – Antarctica, the coldest, highest, windiest, driest,

MY Sarsen was built in 1970 as a North Atlantic survey vessel and equipped with an ice-strengthened hull. She underwent major refurbishment in 1986, and again in 2006 when she was converted into an intimate charter vessel. The winches used for pulling the large fishing nets have been removed and the stern altered to accommodate a landing platform, a small swimming pool and large outdoor dining area with BBQ facilities. Call us for more details and prices.



» MS Lenin «

» when to go « May to October



Russia

New for this autumn are river voyages between **Moscow** and **St. Petersburg** linking the great imperial cities of the czars. Russia's two most famous cities are repositories of astonishing art and architecture.

Spend three rewarding days in each city and, in between, cruise the intricate pattern of rivers, canals and lakes that connect them. The surrounding countryside has inspired writers and musicians for centuries and provides a tranquil contrast to Moscow and St. Petersburg's rich cultural treasures.

Cruises are for ten nights on board the motor ship **Lenin** which has a capacity of 270 passengers. All cabins are external and all have large scenic windows (except on the lower deck) and are equipped with private facilities, air-conditioning, a refrigerator and 220-volt sockets. Whilst the boat trips are on a group basis, we offer pre and post tour extensions in Moscow and St Petersburg on a private basis with our very own English-speaking Russian guides, whose knowledge knows no bounds! On-board entertainment throughout the trip includes folk concerts, lectures on Russian history and traditional dance.

There's nothing more relaxing than being on the water – especially when someone else is at the helm! Here are three delightful and very different cruises offering memories to last a lifetime.



» Mare Australis and Via Australis «

» when to go « Late September to March

Patagonian cruises

The expedition cruise ships **Mare Australis** and **Via Australis** invite you to travel legendary maritime routes and relive the history of navigators and aborigines in the southernmost region of the world. Sail through the legendary **Magellan Strait**, through channels, bays and fjords, passing glaciers, snow-capped peaks, islands and forests of incomparable beauty. Daily shore excursions with professional guides enable you to explore nature close-up in this untamed and relatively unexplored part of South America and provide an insight into the lives of **Patagonia's** early inhabitants.

You can incorporate an expedition cruise as part of your South American holiday, or plan your trip around it. Itineraries are for three or four nights weekly between **Ushuaia** and **Punta Arenas**. Cruises normally run from October to March but this year we can offer a week of special departures from 20 September aboard the M/N **Mare Australis** with a promotional 20 per cent discount. Call us for more details.





DISPATCHES BY HTML

This Spring we launched our newest innovation – a full-colour e-newsletter. Called **Dispatches**, it is exclusively for clients who are in email contact with us and contains the latest news and details of special offers that are available for a limited time. If you would like to receive this in future, all we need is your current email address.

Your feedback

Comments we have received recently from clients about their trip:

"The local representatives were absolutely first class, as was everything produced by Far Frontiers Travel. I would describe my satisfaction with the holiday as 'total'."

Mrs Frances Carver, Belize, December 2007

"Very good holiday"

Mr and Mrs Philip Bland, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia, January 2008

"Excellent holiday. The drivers were very flexible and considerate of our comfort. Their willingness to move on or stop for a coffee was integral to the comfort factor."

Mr and Mrs Philip Berridge, Oman, February 2008

"Wonderful trip, best holiday ever I think!"

Mrs Diana Fisher, Riding in Rajasthan, November/December 007

"Marvellous holiday".

Allen Jones and Deirdre Morrow, India, February 2008

"Excellent guide and first class driver. We loved it and had a wonderful time. Everything was great."

Mrs Sarah McAlpine and Thomas Richter, Mrs Carolyn Parker Bowles, Mr and Mrs Julian Bevan, Jordan and Syria, February 2008

"Excellent holiday – exceeded expectations."

Mr and Mrs Charles Arthur, Moscow and St Petersburg, February 2008



» Mongolia « DOG-SLEDDING

Winter is hard in Mongolia – hard but agonisingly beautiful! Temperatures can fall to - 40°C, making **Ulaanbaatar** the coldest capital in the world. However, the daytime temperature is usually around - 10°C which is perfect for a dog-sledding adventure. It is so invigorating to be in the region's continental climate, where air pressure is high, the sun shines all day and where the nomads are so appreciative of a visitor in the middle of winter!

Dogs have been an integral part of Mongolian nomadic life but it is only recently that dog-sledding has become more widely known. You can combine it with cultural activities or take a trip solely based on dog-sledding. A good time to go is at the time of the festival of the **Mongolian Lunar New Year**, an important traditional celebration when the nomads don their traditional finery and mark the end of the

harsh winter and the coming of spring. The festival focuses on the unity of the family – and is an opportunity for you to visit local families. Another unmissable event, the unique **'Thousand Camel'** festival takes place in the heart of the **Gobi Desert** just after the new year celebrations, from late January to late February. In addition to the colourful opening ceremony, the spectacle includes camel races and polo matches and performances by traditional musicians and dancers. Established to help preserve the Bactrian camel population, it is a rare opportunity to get close up to these amazing animals when they have all their winter fur, and to gain an insight into the nomadic lifestyle of the camel herder.

» prices from « **£2355** per person based on an 11-day itinerary

» Oman « SIX SENSES HIDEAWAY ZIGHY BAY



This luxurious hotel is the ultimate temptation if you have a trip to Oman in your sights.

Immerse yourself in the culture and fascinating history of the **Sultanate of Oman**, a land of unparalleled beauty and contrasts. Here you will find spectacular beaches and diving, palm-fringed wadis and rugged mountains, extraordinary forts and archaeological sites and the amazing orange of the desert. After a few days relaxing in **Muscat**, you might take the coastal road to **Sur** with its boatyards and turtles and then drive into the interior to **Nizwa** with its weekly cattle market. Visit the Bedouin in the **Wahiba Sands**, camp under the stars in Thesiger's **'Empty Quarter'** and visit **Salalah** in the south.

» where to stay « A perfect place to begin or end your stay is at the **Six Senses Hideaway Zighy Bay** on the dramatic **Musandam Peninsula** at the northernmost tip of Oman, where craggy sea cliffs drop into the sea and a mile-long white sandy beach stretches into the distance.

Walk through stepping stones set on water to enter the Spa, where nine treatment rooms await. Leisure facilities include a large central swimming pool with poolside service, non-motorised water

sports and a fully-equipped gymnasium. The pool villas and suites are spacious with rustic chic décor and bathrooms extending to an outdoor shower and private swimming pool and sun deck. Enjoy the modern brasserie and seafood restaurant, excellent wines, the very unconventional bar and the stunning dinner experience high up in the mountains overlooking the bay.

Relax and enjoy the superb spa facilities and venture out to experience the local culture and history, visit mosques, markets and souqs scented with spices and perfumes, or fly down a sand dune in the desert on a sand board or buggy.

» prices from « **£1825** per person for a week's holiday on a bed-and-breakfast basis including scheduled return flights and return airport transfers. Special offers are available for stays during certain times during May to September.