



OUTLINES

April 2008

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all" Shakespeare's Hamlet

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For those receiving this newsletter for the first time, welcome. If you are interested in past copies they are stored on our website <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au> under 'What's New'.

Editor's note: Firstly, my apologies for the delay with this our latest newsletter. I have been travelling again, this time as a guest of Maison De La France to Bordeaux, the Lot Valley, the fabulous volcanic scenery of the Auvergne & Lyon, the second city and gourmet capital of France. I took the opportunity to catch-up with many of our local operators, to see for myself some of the places we feature in our walking, cycling or boating holidays, to inspect some new hotels and restaurants and to see for myself the now infamous new Terminal 5 at London Heathrow (yes I did manage to get my baggage through).

The spring sunshine was wonderful; the blossoms were on the fruit trees and daffodils in bloom. At Chateaux Margaux there was feverish preparation for the impending visit by thousands of the world's top wine buyers to sample the latest vintage to be released. The new Grand Hotel opposite the Opera House in Bordeaux is truly one of the most opulent I have ever seen. At Saint Emilion the pruners were hard at work after a relatively cold winter.

In the glorious Lot Valley I spent a couple of days with James & Diana Tamlyn who run our Walking Party walks in the area. They were preparing for the first departure of their new Pyrenees walk this month & testing new recipes for their Gastronomic holiday later this year. I visited the produce markets at Sarlat in Dordogne and sampled their candied walnuts, nut liqueurs and sheep milk cheeses, saw the underground cave paintings at Lascaux in the Vézère valley. Vulcania in the Auvergne Volcanoes Park was absolutely fascinating with a mixture of science, entertainment and fun. It's a challenge to watch realistic 3D movies with water sprayed into your face and simulated snakes running through your legs and then to emerge to find a dusting of snow highlighting the many volcanoes in the area.

In Lyon, after cocktails with the mayor at the splendid chandeliered town hall, it was down to business with an intensive 2-day workshop meeting with operators, tourist office staff, hoteliers – some new but many many old friends. Having pioneered the active holiday arena for over 20-years it was wonderful to see what was once regarded as radical sitting firmly in the mainstream as walking, cycling, sailing and boating holidays, entice more and more travellers to Europe from Australia.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

FRANCE - A WEEK OF QUALITY WALKING IN THE PYRENEES

Small Group Walking Party holidays - places still available

Departs 25th September 2008

8-days / 7-nights – fully inclusive from just AU\$4805 per person twin share

James and Diana Tamlyn moved to France enthused by the romance and beauty of the area. James' love of the flora and fauna, their combined fascination for the food, wine and local traditions and personal contacts make the week a special experience that you could not enjoy as an individual traveller.

...and introducing Minette Constant MW: Minette is a British Master of Wine who lives with her family in the Béarn, overlooking the Pyrenees. On this very special walking holiday she will be delighted to introduce you to the wonderful variety of wines from this corner of France as well as enjoying more general wine conversation, naturally with a good bottle or two!

Day 1 Meeting at Biarritz airport you will be driven to the beautiful Domaine de Bétouzet standing in undulating countryside just north of Oloron. This is a very pretty eighteenth century chateau with a swimming pool and with six spacious bedrooms all with bathrooms en suite. Here you will meet Minette and for the next three nights we will be having wine carefully selected by Minette with delicious dinners cooked by Diana.

Day 2 Set off on foot from the chateau for a walk to L'Hopital d'Orion through the beautiful countryside of the Béarn. This is soft rolling countryside and we will stop for a picnic before returning to Bétouzet by foot for a wine tasting showing the diversity of wines from southwest France. *Walk: 11km*

Day 3 Drive for a walk from the Béarn into the Basque country with a picnic lunch with fresh local produce. Over dinner at Bétouzet, having focused on the excellent regional wines on the first two nights we will splash out on the grander appellations. We will compare two champagnes before dinner and then enjoy both red and white Bordeaux, before finishing with a delicious bottle of sweet wine. *Walk: 15km*

Day 4 Leave Bétouzet and drive to St Etienne de Baigorry to visit an Irouleguy vineyard. This was wine first made by monks for the pilgrims on their way to Saint Jacques de la Compostelle. We arrive at Sare for our next 3 nights in the lovely Hotel Arraya situated in the central square of this pretty Basque village surrounded by Pyrenean peaks. From here we start walking with the donkeys imported fresh from the Quercy. *Walk: 10km*

Day 5 Leaving Arraya we walk with Daniel and the donkeys towards Ainhoa, a classic Basque village dotted with red and white painted houses and a wonderful charm. Lunch and a return walk to Sare in the undulating foothills of the Pyrenees known locally as the 'Pyrenankles'. *Walk: 20km*

Day 6 A lovely French breakfast of dark black coffee and freshly baked croissants before we set off into the mountains with the donkeys for Spain! This is not a difficult walk through the mountains to Bera Vera. We will picnic on the way with some delicious Spanish wines and fantastic Basque ham (this is the ham that comes from the free roaming pigs that feed on chestnuts which lends it the delicious characteristic sweet flavour) and return to Sare for a fabulous dinner of Basque beauty! *Walk: 21km*

Day 7 The last full day, we drive to Hendaye and catch the ferry across the bay to Hondarribia (Fuenterrabia). This is a very beautiful port of almost Moresque beauty with balconies and brightly coloured facades and extraordinary boxed windows three storeys high. We will lunch here and enjoy wandering around the old port before continuing for our last night in San Sebastian. Our evening is spent in tapas bars eating fabulously well and drinking *zooritos* and *txacoli* (small Spanish beers or chilled Basque white wine) before finishing with a fabulous dinner in the old city. Our last night is spent at the Niza hotel overlooking the bay.

Day 8 Tour ends after breakfast

Limited places still available walking with James & Diana in the English countryside of **Suffolk** departs 30th June – 7th July 2008 or in Umbria departing 15th – 22nd June or 7th – 14th September 2008. Ask too about a week of exquisite **French Gastronomy** in the **Lot Valley** departing 4th – 11th October 2008 – some wonderful cooking experiences, fresh produce markets, local wines, short guided walks and excursions for non-cooks

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WALKING IN BRITAIN – SNOWDONIA

Glacial valleys, medieval castles, slate quarries, fine gardens & an ancient language.

Join our centre-based walk in North Wales for a week of varied walking – with a choice of walking grades each day. Snowdonia boasts some of the grandest mountain scenery south of Scotland; its individual summits are crying out to be explored and there is plenty of scope for challenging mountain walking south of Conwy. Snowdon is the highest Welsh peak and is a thrilling experience whichever way you ascend. Conwy Mountain is easily climbed and offers spectacular views of the Isle of Anglesey. Less demanding walks delve into forests and moorland massifs, and pass brooding lakes and rushing waterfalls.

Departs: 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 May; 7, 14, 21, 28 Jun; 5, 12, 19 Jul; 2, 9, 30 Aug; 6, 13, 20, 27 Sep 08

From Bryn Corach, Conwys - Snowdonia: \$1655 per person (twin or single)

Includes: 7 nights' in a Country House Hotel room usually with ensuite, 7 breakfasts, 7 lunches (picnics on walking days), 7 evening meals, Local transport associated with the walks, Walks leaders, 5 guided walks.

Not Included: Transport to and from the house, on arrival & departure. Drinks.

A typical Classic Walking day will offer you a choice of 2 or 3 guided walks, each of varying length and ascent. If you are new to walking, start at the easier level, where the pace is the gentlest. We have plenty of stops to enjoy the views and to rest. As your holiday progresses you may feel confident to try a more challenging level, or stick to the same level - it's entirely your choice.

On holidays before Easter and from 25 October, your daily choice of walks will generally comprise a medium and a harder walk chosen to suit guest numbers and the cooler weather.

WALKING HOLIDAYS IN FRANCE

Centre-based value walking in the Loire Valley

The Loire Valley region of France is home to some of Europe's most stunning chateaux, and beautiful riverside paths, both of which can be appreciated on our Walking and Sightseeing holidays. The Loire, and its tributaries the Cher and Indre wind through a backdrop of vineyards and lush forests, scattered with fascinating medieval towns and fabulous chateaux. Highlights include Villandry with its formal gardens; the historic tapestries of Azay-le-Rideau and Chenonceau Chateau whose graceful arches span the River Cher. The historic town of Azay-le-Rideau, complete with its fairytale chateau epitomises the charm and history of the Loire Valley.

- Walking along the Loire and Cher Valleys
- Fascinating visits to celebrated chateaux
- NEW Charming 3-star Hotel Le Grand Monarque in Azay-le-Rideau

Centre-based walking at Azay-le-Rideau: \$1765 per person (twin share - single supplement on request)

Departs: 17, 24, 31 May, 7, 14, 21 Jun, 30 Aug, 6, 13, 20, 27 Sept 08 Starts & Ends in Azay-le-Rideau

Includes: 7-nights' in a 3-star hotel room with ensuite, 7-breakfasts, 7-evening meals, Two walks leaders, 5-guided walks. Not Included: Airport transfers (these can be pre-booked at extra cost – please ask for details when booking). Local transport is not included in the cost of your holiday - please allow €75 pp per week for transport, excluding your free day (payable locally in Euros). Neither are sightseeing admissions: (payable locally - allow €30 per person per week).

PROVENCE - HOSTELLERIE BÉRARD RESIDENTIAL COOKING COURSES

A passport to the art of fine cuisine in a typically French Provençal environment. Join Chef René Bérard for a hands-on introduction in English to his kitchen, his kitchen garden, his fruit and vegetable markets and to the fisherman who supply his fresh fish daily. Explore the sights and sounds of Provence in the south of France with quality hotel style accommodation in a typical village setting. The kitchen garden follows the seasons and you will discover produce such as the fresh and annual herbs and grasses of Provence mint, lavender etc.

Course costs Includes:

- * Welcome dinner on Sunday evening
- * 5 nights twin share / double accommodation
- * 5 buffet breakfasts, 4 dinners (4-courses), 4 lunches with drinks
- * All recipes (translated into English)
- * 4-afternoon excursions (vineyard, honeybee farm, olive grove, cheese farm...)

Cost per person: AU\$2350 twin/double share (cost does not include transfers to & from the hotel on arrival / departure or personal expenses).

Dates for 2008: 4th – 9th & 25th – 30th May, 8th – 13th & 22nd – 27th Jun, 14th – 19th Sep, 28th Sep – 3rd Oct, 12th – 17th Oct, 2nd – 7th & 16th – 21st Nov, 30th Nov – 5th Dec (truffles special)

ANZAC DISCOVERY TOUR in FRANCE

Guided Battlefield Tour of Ypres & the Somme - 4 Days/3 Nights – departs daily on demand

Our ANZAC tours are structured around a three-day visit to "Ypres, The Somme and Fromelles". Tours are designed for visitors to France from Australia and New Zealand who wish to explore the region or their family history of the battlefields. The program endeavours to tell the story of the World War 1 battles by travelling the whole length of the front lines at Ypres and the Somme.

After the disaster of Gallipoli (1915) the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was reorganized and expanded from two to five infantry divisions, which were progressively transferred to France (Marseilles), beginning in March 1916. At that time, the war on the Western Front had long been settled in a stalemate, with the opposing armies facing each other across defensive systems that extended for more than 700 km across Belgium and northeast France from the English Channel to the Swiss border.

Soon after the arrival of the first Aussies in France they were sent to Armentieres and Messines Ridge. The first big battle was in Fromelles on 19th July 1916 where the Australians suffered 5,533 casualties in 24 hours. By the end of the year 42,270 Australians had been killed or wounded at the battle of the Somme and other battlegrounds on the Western Front.

In 1917, Australians were involved in battles at Bullecourt, Messines Ridge (the first victory in the Ypres Salient) and in the four-month long campaign around Ypres, known as the battle of Passchendaele. Eventually, thanks to the initiative of the Australian General Monash, who had the idea to combine infantry, artillery, tanks and aircraft more efficiently, Australians were able to capture Hamel spur on 4 July 1918.

The Allied Army's offensive began on 8 August at Amiens. It contributed to Australian success at Mont St Quentin and Peronne, and permitted the capture of the Hindenburg Line. In early October the Australian divisions withdrew from the front for rest and refitting; they were preparing to return when Germany surrendered on 11 November 1918.

Our guide is French and tours are conducted in English. The program is reasonably flexible to meet visitor's expectations. Battlefield tours are a kind of pilgrimage and often Australians & New Zealanders who visit are the first of the family to visit the grave of a grand father, an uncle or relative and for each visitor, it is a personal itinerary. If you have relatives who took part to The Great War, provide information (regiment, battalion, etc.), prior to your arrival and if time allows we will research some of the important places to visit for you.

4-day package: AU\$1045 per person twin share (single supplement AU\$260)
Departs: Any day of the week at 1.00pm from Lille railway station (EuroLille or Lille Flanders)
Return: Tour ends at 17.00 pm at Lille railway station.

Battlefield Package includes:

- Transfer from Lille railway station and back
- Bed & breakfast accommodation
- Transportation to all sites
- 2 lunches (dinners are not included)
- Entry fees, refreshments drinks during the tours
- Chauffeur and guide through the entire tour (possibility to visit other places on request.)

BIKE & BARGE IN EUROPE UPDATE

What do we have available?

Demand is fast outstripping supply with these barges so early bookings are essential. We still have cabins available – cruises are 8-days / 7-nights unless specified otherwise:

FRANCE	Loire Valley departs Saturdays April to October (mostly full for 2008) \$1550 Burgundy departs Saturdays April to October (some dates available) at \$1650 Champagne - Reims to Paris 2 nd August at \$1650
BELGIUM/FRANCE	Paris to Bruges (2008 full) book now for October 2009 - 2 weeks at \$2855
HOLLAND	Tulip fields cruise from Amsterdam 11 th May at \$1650 Northern Holland 24 th May, 22 nd June, 20 th July, 3 rd , 10 th & 31 st August at \$1660 Amsterdam – Rotterdam 24 th May at \$1650 On the trail of Rembrandt 14 th & 28 th June, 5 th , 12 th , 19 th & 26 th July, also 2 nd , 9 th & 23 August, 6 th & 13 th September at \$1380
HOLLAND/BELGIUM	Bruges to Amsterdam 8 th June at \$1650 Amsterdam to Bruges 6 th July at \$1650 Bruges to Amsterdam 13 th July at \$1650 Bruges to Amsterdam 14 th September at \$1650
GERMANY	River Main & Neckar from Frankfurt – Ludwigsburg 14 th June at \$1650 River Rhine Ludwigburg to Koblenz 5 th July (includes Lorelei Rock) at \$1650 Ludwigburg to Frankfurt 23 rd August (limited space) at \$1650 River Saar & Moselle Metz to Cochem 6 th & 13 th September at \$1650 River Moselle – Saarbrücken to Koblenz 18 th October at \$1460
HOLLAND/GERMANY	Amsterdam – Koblenz 21 st June from \$1650 Repositioning cruise Koblenz to Amsterdam 18 th October at \$1460
GREECE	Weekly Cyclades, Ionian Is, central or southern Aegean April to October \$1930
CROATIA	Weekly Dalmatian coast or Kvarner Bay island hopping - April to October \$1595 Southern Dalmatia (new ship) 21 st June & 28 th June \$1790
TURKEY	Weekly departures Lycian coast from Marmaris to Fethiye April to October \$1930
CANADA	Weekly departures on St Laurence River – New tours for 2008 – ask for details

Contact us for day-to-day itineraries - costs include twin share or single cabins (with supplements) accommodation (with own bathrooms), buffet breakfasts, dinner, bed linen, bike rental, and tour guide. Cycling days are graded easy, moderate or challenging with free time to explore cities or places of interest

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CYCLING IN VIETNAM

HO CHI MINH CITY (SAIGON) TO HUE

Departs: 20th Oct – 2nd Nov, 9th Nov – 22nd Nov 2008, 8th Jan – 21st Jan, 22nd Feb - 7th Mar 2009
Duration: 14-days / 13-nights
Tour cost: AU\$2730 per person for 2008 (based on a minimum of 6 per tour). Maximum of 18 cyclists.
Bike hire: AU\$320
Rating: Moderate - most roads paved but surfaces often rough - mountain bike with road tyres are idea.

The trip can also be split into 2 sections: **Beaches and Highlands** (\$1560 per person) from Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) to Nha Trang and **Ancient Vietnam** (\$1510 per person) which is Nha Trang to Hue. We also offer a Mekong Delta 4-day / 3-nights extension (\$770 per person) best suited to pre-tour, as it starts and ends in Ho Chi Minh City) and a Hanoi and Halong Bay 4-day post tour (\$780 per person) that includes an overnight on a junk in the World Heritage Park.



Journey from cosmopolitan Saigon to the golden beaches of Nha Trang, historic Hoi An and the Imperial City of Hue. We offer you the chance to see this captivating country alongside the friendly locals, as you pedal past rice fields, visit local ethnic villages and explore imperial cities.

Our Vietnam cycling route has been created to include quiet roads and an extra day in the Highlands. Visit cosmopolitan Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), Dalat - an old French spa resort, the beach resort of Nha Trang, historic Hoi An and the Imperial City of Hue.

We stay at mostly 3 and 4 star hotels and lodges that have been carefully chosen for their character and location. We run many custom tours for groups small or large, using the standard of accommodation of your choice. Groups larger than six cyclists qualify for a discount.

Distances between overnight lodgings in Vietnam are often too far to cycle, so we drive part way and cycle the best and most scenic sections, avoiding the busy highways. The trip is fully supported with drivers and English-speaking guides cycling with the clients and includes three meals a day most days.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT OUR HOLIDAYS

News & comments this month

GREAT OCEAN WALK - Just a quick Thank You to you all for getting Lyn and myself onto the Great Ocean Walk last week, at late notice. We had a wonderful time. The company of 3 other ladies plus 2 guides were great people and the accommodation worked out very well with those numbers

The Walk was amazingly beautiful, lots of coastal lookouts onto the Southern Ocean, sometimes-huge vistas, sometimes-just glimpses. The walk also went inland at times, this was not as interesting as the coast but it was quite green countryside for this time of year. The walk was challenging but not too difficult, moderate walking for most of the time with some very steep and sandy sections. The tide was in when we were on the beaches so we had to walk through the soft sand and this was hard on the legs and knees! We walked about 17km each day and did it easily within the times suggested by Parks Victoria. Some of our group were fast walkers but we walked at a comfortable speed with time to take in the vistas.

A highlight was our one night at Cape Otway Lighthouse - we were lucky enough to get our own special night time guided tour of the lighthouse in the moonlight. We were also fortunate that one of the guides was a local man and his knowledge of the area and it's history was very interesting. The other guide came from Adelaide, which seemed a bit strange at first, but he was very professional and well skilled. Both guys were very good

cooks and our meals were delicious! A wonderful walk which we would recommend to anyone interested in that beautiful part of Victoria. Thanks again Jenny & Lyn

HOLLYFORD WALK NEW ZEALAND -everything went very well with your group's organisation of our NZ holiday arrangements. The Hollyford Track Guided Walk was magnificent and educational greatly due to the efforts of our expert guides, Phil & Blair and the lodge's hosts - the perfect weather was an additional bonus. We experienced Milford Sound at its best - hardly a cloud in the sky. Our Doubtful Sound Wilderness Experience was most enjoyable and picturesque.

We were very pleased with all our accommodation, especially our hosts Carl & Jane at the Alexis Queenstown. All our transfers worked exceptionally well including our various luggage requirements. Many thanks to you and your staff for all your expert organisation of our NZ Holiday. Allan & Jan

CYCLING IN NEW ZEALAND –cater very well for the serious cyclist offering around 80+km per day with substantial hills. They do include some local points of interest as you tour but it is difficult to cover too much as the cycling takes time and is tiring. The guides were very well informed and carried reference books about history, flora and fauna.

The casual cyclist can ride in the van as much as desired and it was never an issue to load and unload the bike. You are still very much a part of the cycling trip as the guides are constantly waiting for and checking on all the group. Too much time in the van may become boring. To access the quieter and more scenic regions, the selection of accommodation is reduced and varies greatly. Everywhere was acceptable. This also applies to the food but mostly we were well catered for and had some really excellent meals. New Zealand does not offer the secondary road structure found in Europe so riding on main roads becomes inevitable. Generally drivers were considerate. However, when it came to the major highways, we took the van option.

Our group of eleven was evenly comprised of Canadians, Americans, Australians and one English woman. Five of the group were singles, three being women. The group ranged in age from 42 to 79 years old and really bonded as the week progressed. An excellent experience and satisfying as you will improve through the course of the trip. Susan

CYCLING IN CHINA - The cycling trip was absolutely spectacular! It rained the first couple of days (which made for quite adventurous travel) but it didn't spoil anything as it meant the rest of the trip was through lush green countryside. The accommodation was more than I had expected as we slept and ate like royalty the entire way. The people of southern china were so friendly and hospitable.

I was glad to have taken a local guide due to the language barrier and the chance to be taken to the best cycling routes that we probably would have missed if we had done by ourselves. I would also like to make special mention and commendation of our tour guide Leon and our driver Dragon. Please pass this on to their boss in China. Leon was an enthusiastic and charming young man which made the cycling tour a most enjoyable experience. He was clear and articulate on all plans each day and potential problematic issues (closed roads, poor weather conditions etc). He went far and beyond to take particular special care of us and always made us feel at ease in any situation. I would highly recommend Leon as a superb tour guide for any group. Leon definitely played an important part in making my china holiday memorable and exciting. Dragon too was a fabulous comfort to have. Always prepared to assist in any way and did so with keenness. Although spoke little English, his delightful disposition and quirky sense of humour made for enjoyable travel.

All in all, I would highly recommend this cycle tour. You definitely need a good fitness level as some of the hills are quite long. Thanks again for helping me organise this at such short notice. Anna

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

The Crédencial on the Way of St James

For walkers or pilgrims alike this passport or *credencial* is available on demand from the Associations of the Friends of Santiago or from Catholic institutions along the Way of ST James in France or Spain for a small fee. At each stage you can get it stamped in churches, tourist offices or even in hotels. To receive your 'certificate of the pilgrim' at Santiago you must have on your *credencial* all the stamps from at least the last 100km before Santiago. **Outdoor Travel** offers one to eleven week self-guided walking routes on the Camino with daily departures including the 100km section from Sarria to Santiago – ask for our 2008 brochure:

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

WALKING IN NEW ZEALAND

Mount Cook National Park– a most challenging walk across Ball Pass

A New Zealand walking holiday is something you can do to prepare yourself for one of our many walks in Europe from April to October. New Zealand's walking season is from November to March and there are still places available on the following walks:

- * Milford Track – guided or self-guided
- * Grand Traverse
- * Abel Tasman Guided Walk
- * Stewart Island Kiwi Trek
- * Dusky Track
- * Hump Track
- * Mount Cook Ball Pass Trek
- * Routeburn Track – guided or self-guided
- * Hollyford Track
- * Queen Charlotte Walkway
- * Akaroa Walk
- * Heaphy Track
- * Nelson Lakes Traverse
- * Walks at Tongariro / Mount Ruapehu

Reservations now open on the Milford Track in 2008/09 – check with us for the weekly status reports.

ABEL TASMAN - AWAROA HOMESTEAD UPGRADE

3 or 5-day guided walks or sea-kayaking tours available all year round



Going up



Rebuild



Result!



Touch Down next door



Cottage glimpse



Hybrid Power systems

The Abel Tasman 3 or 5-day guided walks or sea-kayaking trips operate all year round on one of the sunniest coasts in New Zealand. Ask for a copy of our brochure.

JAPAN – 2-DAY MOUNT FUJI CLIMB

Departs 6, 13, 21, 28 July, 4, 10, 17, 24, 31 August 2008.

Mount Fuji, Japan's iconic holy mountain is regularly climbed by beginners and pilgrims however it is a strenuous hiking, best undertaken in summer with an experienced guide and mountain climbing equipment is recommended. We have a chance to build a 2-days Mt Fuji tour into your full Japan holiday itinerary on selected dates.

A minimum of 14 participants is required for each tour departure to be confirmed & due to weather and other circumstances the guide will make the final decision & if necessary reduce the climbing distance or cancel a departure – especially as the average temperatures at the summit in July-August are 4-6 degrees centigrade.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

WALKING IN AUSTRALIA

Places still available

Kangaroo Island Walking 5-days / 4-nights departing 17th May 2008 from Adelaide) at \$1479 per person.

Flinders Ranges / Heysen Trail 7-days / 6-nights walking departing 7th June and 5th July from Adelaide at \$1460

These tour costs are based on twin-share accommodation (with private bathrooms) fully inclusive of meals, experienced guides, luggage transfers & support vehicle – ask for a detailed itinerary

CROWN BLUE LINE – LE BOAT

Self-skipped motor cruisers in France & Europe 2008

The new brochure for 2008 is now available – new destinations & new bases are on offer in France, Italy, Germany, Holland, England, Ireland, Scotland & Belgium.

BOOKING DISCOUNTS – available for **all** 2008 reservations made from 30th April (ask for updates):

France Burgundy - 15% discount off all May, June, July, Sep or October departures

France Brittany - 15% discount off May, June or July departures

Ireland 15% discount off any 2008 departures

England Norfolk Broads - Wroxham - 15% discount off all 2008 departures

EARLY DISCOUNTS FOR 2009 – 10% discount of **all** boats / destinations (except the Royal Mystique) made before 13th November 2008

2008 brochure now available – request your copy now info@outdoortravel.com.au

HOTEL BARGE DISCOUNTS IN EUROPE

SAVE 25% PER PERSON ON SELECTED DEPARTURES

France - available cabin space aboard L'Impressionniste in Provence & Camargue or La Belle Epoque in Burgundy in May

LATE AVAILABILITY – MAY & SEPTEMBER 2008 - We have 4 twins lower deck and 2 doubles upper deck available on the **24th May 2008** on the **Litote** in **Burgundy**. We also have one last cabin on the **Libellule**, again in **Burgundy**, departing on **13th September 2008**.

Extra dates now available on **Le Phénicien** on the River Rhone in **Provence** on 27th July & 24th August

Cruises depart every week – mostly from Paris – ask for a copy of the new hotel barge brochures

AIRFARES TO EUROPE

What's New from our Fares Desk fares@outdoortravel.com.au

Qantas has become the latest airline to incorporate the Premium Economy Product into their aircraft, yesterday unveiling the new range soon to be employed across the B747-400 and A380 aircraft. And it appears that the national carrier isn't dilly-dallying with the product, initiating the first Boeing 747 with the product into service today. Aircraft registration VH-OJK will operate today's QF127 Sydney–Hong Kong service.

"We have invested significantly in developing this cabin, which is being progressively installed across our B747-400 fleet and will be available on every Qantas A380," said John Borghetti, Qantas Executive General Manager. "Qantas Premium Economy offers extra space and comfort and enhanced levels of service." Qantas'

Premium Economy product is set to offer the world's best recline and pitch, with a nine inch seat recline and up to 42" seat pitch.

Designed by Marc Newson and manufactured by Recaro, the seat also features a six-way adjustable headrest, integrated leg rest, foldout footrest, and a wide centre console with a fixed cocktail table. "The new service also includes priority check-in, dedicated cabin crew, an additional hand baggage allowance, and priority boarding and disembarkation," adds Mr Borghetti.

In terms of the food & beverages offered, passengers in Premium Economy will enjoy meals from a Neil Perry inspired menu with premium wines, as well as a self-service bar offering a selection of refreshments throughout the flight.

Qantas will add three more aircraft to fly the product by the end of the month. Initial launch routes of the product will be between Sydney and London and Sydney and Johannesburg.

For all your airfare needs – call **Yvette** for details or reservations on (03) 57501441 **OR** see our SmartFares airfare search engine on our website <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>



RAIL TRAVEL IN THE UK

50% off for you and a UK based family member or friend

BritRail Consecutive Pass: England, Scotland and Wales

Price Per person	Class of travel	4 days	8 days	15 days	22 days	1 month
Adult	1 st	\$218	\$313	\$469	\$595	\$704
Adult	2 nd	\$145	\$208	\$313	\$395	\$469

BritRail FlexiPass: England, Scotland and Wales

Price Per person	Class of travel	4 days	8 days	15 days
Adult	1 st	\$273	\$399	\$601
Adult	2 nd	\$184	\$266	\$403

BritRail Consecutive Pass: England

Price Per person	Class of travel	4 days	8 days	15 days	22 days	1 month
Adult	1 st	\$175	\$250	\$375	\$476	\$563
Adult	2 nd	\$116	\$166	\$250	\$316	\$375

BritRail FlexiPass: England

Price Per person	Class of travel	4 days	8 days	15 days
Adult	1 st	\$218	\$319	\$481
Adult	2 nd	\$147	\$213	\$323

Conditions: Valid for sale until 31 December 2008, subject to change without notice. Passes must be validated within 6 months of the date of issue. Offer valid for Australian, New Zealand, South African and Indian travellers and a UK guest. The UK guest passenger must travel with the pass-holder at all times and provide proof of residence upon request. All passes are non exchangeable and non refundable. Passes are subject to a \$10.00 pass issuance fee, bookings requiring reservations will incur a minimum \$30 booking fee.

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DID YOU KNOW.....

PARIS LONG DISTANCE WALKING TRAIL GR1 – a complete circumnavigation of this wonderful city departs de la Porte Maillot via les Hauts de Seine, les Yvelines, l'Essonne, la Seine et Marne, l'Oise et le Val d'Oise via St Cloud, Vaucresson, Marly le Roi, Feucherolles, Neuphle le Château, Montfort l'Amaury, Poigny la Forêt, Rambouillet, St Arnoult en Yvelines, Dourdan, Breuillet, Lardy, Vayres sur Essonne, Buno Bonneveaux, Malesherbes, Barbizon, Melun, Champeaux, Fontenay Trésigny, Crécy la Chapelle, Meaux, Dammartin en Goële, Thiers sur Thève, Luzarches, Nerville la Forêt, Ennery, Bréançon, Sagy, Orgeval et Chambourcy. For details see <http://www.gr-infos.com/gr1.htm>

GERMAN NATIONAL WALKING DAY – 26th – 30th June 2008. An expected 40,000 people will participate in this year's events at Fulda – <http://www.wanderbares-deutschland.de>

WALKING IN ENGLAND - North Devon and Exmoor Walking Festival is from **1st - 9th May 2008** with a choice of 66-guided walks covering all of Exmoor and North Devon. There are short gentle walks through to full day energetic hikes, something for all abilities. Find out more here <http://www.walkingnorthdevon.co.uk/>

SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL IN MAY - If you are interested in anything Spanish, make sure you click on the following link (<http://www.spanishfilmfestival.com>) and attend the Spanish Film Festival, this year presented by the Cervantes Institute

GRAND OPENING OF TERMINAL 5 AT LONDON HEATHROW - The Queen has officially opened Heathrow Airport's controversial Terminal 5, describing it as "a 21st Century gateway to Britain". Hundreds of airport and construction workers attended the opening ceremony. The £4.3bn terminal offers extra passenger capacity but no more flights. [Find out more about Terminal 5 here](#)

AUSTRALIA RANKS FOURTH IN TOURISM REPORT - A new report says that the World Economic Forum (WEF) has ranked Australia the fourth most competitive tourism destination among 130 countries worldwide in a new report.

The Tourism and Transport Competitiveness Report 2008 by the Geneva-based foundation ranked each country using 14 characteristics - including environmental sustainability, transport and tourism infrastructure and natural resources - to find the countries best placed to compete for tourism dollars into the future.

Switzerland was ranked first for its impressive number of World Heritage cultural and natural sites, its excellent education and training for tourism staff and transport infrastructure. Austria was ranked second and Germany third for its cultural and natural resources and fairs and exhibitions that cater for business travellers.

Australia was the only Asian and Oceanic country in the top 10, and scored a special mention for ranking first worldwide for its number of World Heritage natural sites and fifth for its cultural resources. The report noted that the importance of the natural environment in Australia's leisure tourism was well backed up by stringent environmental regulations.

Australia's "excellent" air transport infrastructure and "good" tourism infrastructure were also mentioned. Australia also benefits from the relatively strong government prioritisation of the tourism sector and effective destination-marketing campaigns," the report said. The report noted the public's rising interest in the environment would become a major factor in the industry. "With this increasing awareness, the demand for green tourism products is expected to grow further in the years to come," it says.

WHATS'S ON IN ITALY – See <http://www.italiantourism.com.au> for details

Lucio Fontana scultore

Rome - Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna - Until May 11 – <http://www.gnam.arte.beniculturali.it>

GNAM, The National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art, is hosting an exhibition entirely dedicated to the works of sculptor Lucio Fontana until May 11, 2008. The project draws inspiration from the exhibition held at the Palazzo Ducale in Mantova from September to January 2007 and sets out to expand its success and interest. To get the public into the spirit of the exhibition, the works are displayed chronologically backwards, starting from the most famous pieces from the '50s and '60s until the beginning of the artist's career. Filippo Trevisani is the curator of the exhibition.

Sebastiano Del Piombo

Rome – Palazzo Venezia - Until May 18 – <http://www.mondomostre.it>

The first monographic exhibition dedicated to Sebastiano del Piombo, the painter born in Venice in 1485, is taking place in Palazzo Venezia in Rome, the city where the artist reached his artistic peak. There are 37 paintings and 18 drawings on display, as well as 3 by Michelangelo, in a retrospective that details the stylistic evolution of del Piombo, a contemporary of Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Giorgione and Titian. This is a very evocative installation, one in which each artwork is individually lit up to highlight the grandiosity of this often forgotten master.

Mirò – La terra

Ferrara – Palazzo dei Diamanti - Until May 25 – <http://www.artecultura.fe.it>

The Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara serves as a splendid backdrop for the exhibition of one of the most important figurative artists of the 20th century: Joan Mirò. This is the first international exhibit that explores the relationship between the artist and the earth, in the development of his imagination and art. There are paintings that span the period from 1918 to 1956 on display and Palma de Mallorca, the poles of a varied and interesting journey made available to the public.

Vincenzo Agnetti. Retrospettiva (1967-1980)

Rovereto – Mart – Until June 1 – <http://www.mart.trento.it>

The Mart in Rovereto will host a wide selection of works on loan from private and public Italian collections of one of the main names in Italian conceptual art, Vincenzo Agnetti. Agnetti received his training in Milan in the '60s and rejected traditional art, continuing instead his theoretical reflections on art, its role and languages, while shifting his attention to the actual production of art. This is the beginning of his Assiomi (Axioms), enigmatic assertions etched on Bakelite circles, his writing on felt and collages.

Rally d'Italia Sardegna

Olbia - May 15-18 – <http://www.rallyitaliasardegna.com>

The Rally d'Italia Sardegna, 6th leg of the World Rally Championship and 3rd stage of the Mondiale Super 1600, takes place on 15-18th May. While Olbia is the base of operations, the opening ceremony and finish line are in the beautiful location of Porto Cervo. The rally is organized by the Automobile Club d'Italia and includes 17 special trials along 3 stages. For the first time ever the rally takes place in the same area, between Monte Lerno, Monte Acuto and Monte Olia.

Rome International Festival of Photography

Palazzo delle esposizioni - Museo di Roma in Trastevere - Mattatoio di Testaccio – Until 25th May 2008
<http://www.fotografifestival.it>

The long awaited Festival della Fotografia will include exhibitions that include both institutional and private galleries. The most prestigious and symbolically representative piece of event will be held at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, with a rich program of events, films and meeting with both international and Italian artists.

EARTHWATCH AUSTRALIA - GIVING SOMETHING BACK TO HELP OUR ENVIRONMENT - Earthwatch is an international not-for-profit environmental organisation whose research expeditions allow you to make contributions to important conservation work. You can get up-close and personal with some of Australia's most fascinating creatures while experiencing parts of the 'sun-burned country' many never see.

100% of tax-deductible donations to Earthwatch are used for research and education. Volunteers' financial contributions also help fund the important scientific research. *Echidnas and Goannas of Kangaroo Island* (weekends) runs April, October and November. *Freshwater Turtles of the Kimberley* (two weeks) runs June and July. *Koala Ecology* (two weeks) runs May, July and October.

Earthwatch also offers specific programs for teachers and students, and the full range of Earthwatch expeditions is available at <http://www.earthwatch.org.au> or by calling (03) 9682 6828.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

PLANNING TO LEARN A LANGUAGE - EURO-ENGLISH

The European Union (EU) has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the EU rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, the British Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that would become known as "Euro-English".

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of "k". This should klear up konfursion, and keyboards can have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with "f". This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling can be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikatated changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent "e" in the languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th yer people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v". During ze fifz yer, ze unesesary "o" can be dropd from vords kontaining "ou" and after ziz fifz yer, ve vil hav a reil sensi bl rite n styl.

Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru. Und efter ze fifz yer, ve vil al be speking German like zey vunted in ze forst plas.

If zis mad you smil, pleas pas on to oza pepl.

A WONDERFUL PHOTO?

Put yourself in the picture.... trimming the hedges in the Dordogne Valley in France



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- 3) Go to <http://www.googleearth.com/> for a graphic view of the world we visit walking or cycling
- 4) Want help in finding you way around Australia – <http://www.travelmate.com.au/>

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