

IN THIS ISSUE

Hotel Bargaining discounts still available in France

Walking in Britain – centre-based walking – ideal for singles

Walking in Canada – Spirit Walker

Walking holidays in Australia – program for 2005/6

Cycling in Spain – Along the Camino de Santiago

Horse riding in the Chianti Hills of Italy

Beware – new airport ‘no joking’ signs mean business!

Brochure order form for 2005

They say that travel broadens the mind – well ours are putting on a few pounds as we search to improve our knowledge of new destinations and activities, to improve our relationships with our tour operators and to improve our ability to be aware, astute and fully competitive in an ever increasingly global market place.

In the last few months our staff have been sailing in the Queensland Whitsunday Islands and walking the many beautiful National Park Trails (see www.epa.qld.gov.au/greatwalks), walking the bianca strada in Tuscany and along the Via Dell Amore - the coastal path of the Cinque Terre – in the sun and the snow as these pictures will attest - horse riding in the Chianti Hills, visiting the island of Fukuoka in Japan, whale-watching in Vancouver, attending travel workshops in Toulouse, Paris, Brittany, the Dordogne, Birmingham, Christchurch, Montreal, Milan and Rimini, cycling the Italian Adriatic Coast at Riccione, cruising the Canal du Midi in France and the Grand Union Canal in England, walking on the Queen Charlotte Track in New Zealand and cycling the Mountains to the Murray bike trail in Victoria's north-east. Some even managed to take their family to EuroDisney in Paris!

And do we have some tales to tell..... but tell us if we go too far!



We hope you will enjoy this edition of our newsletter – will recommend it to your friends (as it can only be obtained from us by email) - and will call our staff to talk about your own active holiday plans.

Most importantly we hope you will visit our new, updated website www.outdoortravel.com.au & especially the 'What's new' section where many new holiday ideas (not in our brochures) are listed

And, if you are looking for the best airmfares to your chosen destinations then with access to the latest information and up to the minute fare deals through our Smartfares Computer Reservations System, click-on to our website www.outdoortravel.com.au and to: [Outdoor Travel fares](#) for an up to date quote on your travel plans - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

LATEST DISCOUNT OFFERS – HOTEL BARGE CRUISING ON THE CANALS OF FRANCE

PLACES STILL AVAILABLE FOR 2005

MV ANACOLUTHE - See Monet's Garden, Van Gough's early home & the village of Chablis & **SAVE up to \$750** per person. Operated this season by Canal & Co, run by the former Manager in France of Continental Waterways - the hotel barge *Anacoluthé* offers comfortable twin-deck onboard accommodation with ensuite cabins and a wonderful schedule of leisurely cruising, gourmet meals and guided sightseeing by air-conditioned bus in the Champagne – Upper Loire region.

Cruises depart every Saturday - in season - from central Paris from just AU\$2725 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 4th June or 2nd, 16th or 30th July 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering clients a **discount of \$750** per person off the price of the Anacoluthé cruise.

MV L'ESPRIT d'EUROPE - See Monet's Garden, Empress Josephine's Home & Normandy & **SAVE up to \$750** per person. Also operated by Canal & Co the L'Esprit d'Europe cruises the River Seine from Paris to the heart of Normandy. Highlights include a night in central Paris, Chateau Malmaison – home of Empress Josephine, Claude Monet home and gardens at Giverny, Rouen and the Abbaye of Jumiege.

Cruises depart every Saturday - in season - from central Paris from just AU\$2725 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 24th September or 01st October 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering clients a **discount of \$750** per person off the price of this cruise.

MV LIBELLULE - See River Saône & Lower Burgundy, Beaujolais Vineyards, Beaune & Dijon & **SAVE \$750** per person. Also operated by Canal & Co the Libellule cruises the River Saône with its picturesque riverside towns, Taste the wines of Beaujolais and the Abbey of Cluny. Cruises depart every Saturday - in season - from central Paris from just AU\$3180 per person for 6-nights.

For cruises departing on 30th April 2005 Outdoor Travel are offering clients a **discount of \$750** per person off the price of this cruise.

WALKING IN BRITAIN - For those travelling singly or wishing the company of other walkers, we offer a program of one-hotel walks with regular – often weekly departures - throughout the season in the UK and across Europe.

These centre-based 7 and 14-night classic walking holidays are designed to be flexible. Up to 2 different guided walks will be offered each walking day, varied according to length and degree of difficulty and each group's abilities. If you are new to walking, start at the easiest level, where the pace is the gentlest and 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.

Destinations in the UK include: The Lake District (Derwent and Coniston Water), Yorkshire Dales, North York Moors, Northumberland, Dartmoor, Exmoor, Cornwall, Isle of Wight, South Downs, Cotswolds and Derbyshire.

Destinations in Europe include: Spain, Portugal, Greece, France, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Ireland.

Many of these holidays are described in detail under "What's New" on our website www.outdoortravel.com.au Here are some to consider for 2005:

HARRINGTON HOUSE, ENGLISH COTSWOLDS - The Cotswolds are famous for all that is quintessentially English, with golden stone villages, handsome manor houses, rolling cornfields and green valleys.

Our guided classic walking holidays will allow you to discover this most English of landscapes. There are village-to-village walks as well as delightful paths through woodlands, meadows and across the Cotswold plateau.

The Cotswold Way provides some of the most scenic walking with medieval churches, country estates, ancient sites and Roman villas.

2005 Classic Walking Departures: 25 Mar, 14, 21, 28 May, 11, 18, 25 June, 9, 16, 23, 30 July, 6, 13, 20, 27 August, 3, 10, 24 September, 1, 8, 15, 22 October (other dates & shorter walks available).

Cost Per person: AU\$1480

Tour price includes: 7 nights of twin share accommodation with en-suite, breakfast & dinner each night, picnic lunches, guided walking as described and sightseeing (at extra cost).

ST IVES CORNWALL - Cornwall's towering granite cliffs, golden beaches and atmospheric old fishing ports combine to form England's most dramatic stretch of coastline. The superb coastal path snakes around the rugged headlands providing an ever changing array of sea views, whilst ghostly shells of abandoned tin mines provide dramatic silhouettes on the skyline. St Ives, with its historic narrow streets, fresh sea air and sandy coves, encompasses everything that makes the Cornish coast so special.

Departure dates for 2005: 2, 9, 16, 23 April, 21, 28 May, 4, 8, 11, 25 June 2, 9, 16, 23 July 13, 20, 27 August, 3, 10, 17, 24 September, 1, 8, 15 October.

Cost Per person: AU\$1460

GLEN COE, SCOTLAND - Our Classic Walking holidays in Scotland are designed to be flexible. Book one of these breaks; sound in the knowledge that up to 3 different guided walks will be offered, varied according to length and degree of difficulty, each walking day.

2005 Classic Walking Departures: 7, 14, 21, 28 May 4, 11, 18, 25 June 2, 9, 16 July 6, 13, 20, 27 August 3, 10, 17, 24 September 1, 8 October (other dates & shorter walks may be available – ask for details).

Cost Per person: AU\$1575 – no single supplements are charged

SOUTHERN YORKSHIRE DALES - The Yorkshire Dales National Park is deeply rural, with its stone-walled dales and an abundance of natural beauty, including wild flowers, waterfalls, scars, caves and limestone pavements. The Dales are home to a number of features for you to

discover, such as the 250ft cliff of Malham Cove and Gordale Scar. Streams and quaint former lead mining communities are dotted throughout the beautiful valleys, while The Three Peaks of Ingleborough, Wharfedale and Pen-y-ghent are extremely rewarding for the keen walker. The challenging long distance trail of the Dales Way offers a complete Dales experience.

Departure dates for 2005: Mon 7, Fri 11, Mon 14, 21, Sun 27 Feb; Fri 4, 11 March; Mon 4, Sun 10, 17 April; Mon 2, Sat 14, 28 May; Wed 1, Sat 11, 25 June; 9, Tues 12 July; Fri 5 Aug; Sat 3, 17 Sept; Sat 1, Mon 10, 17, 24, 31 Oct; Fri 4, Mon 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov; Mon 5 Dec.

Alternative itinerary dates: Mon 7, Sun 20, Fri 25, Tues 29 March; Fri 22, 29 April; Sat 7, Wed 11, Sat 21, Wed 25 May; Sat 4, 18, Wed 22 June; Sat 2, Mon 18, Sat 30 July; Mon 8, Sat 27 Aug; Sat 10, Wed 14, Sun 25, Wed 28 Sept; Fri 7, 14, 21, 28 Oct; Fri 11, 18, Fri 25 Nov; 2, 9 Dec

As different departures may have different itineraries, please ask for your trip's itinerary when booking.

Cost Per person: AU\$1610

Tour price includes: 7 nights of twin share accommodation with en-suite, breakfast & dinner each night, picnic lunches, guided walking as described and sightseeing (at extra cost - as available).



WALKING IN THE ROCKIES - CANADIAN SPIRIT WALKER

SMALL GROUP CENTRE-BASED WALKING & ACTIVITY HOLIDAYS - THE NATIVE North American culture and their rich history in the Canadian Rocky Mountains are inseparable from the natural environment that surrounds us, those wide expanses of nature and wilderness that the natives devoted their culture to respecting and protecting long before we

arrived. This unique holiday was created to give you an exciting wilderness adventure, including hiking, backpacking, exploring, and river rafting, alongside the opportunity to experience the wilderness through native eyes. Connecting with nature in this way will be an enlightening and refreshing experience.

The spirits of the early ancestors of the Kootenay River region near to Calgary assist our guides as we learn of the essence of the Canadian Rocky Mountains and beyond.....

Lodge-based, all inclusive walking trips: with a 3-day backpacking and exploring expedition; river rafting; native ceremonies; native cultural and wilderness activities with a native elder.

Departures dates: 18 – 25 July, 8 – 15 August, 22 – 29 August 2005

Cost per person: A\$2095

Cost includes:

- * 8 days / 7 nights with experienced guides & class 1-2 (easy to moderate) walking
- * All tours include all taxes, meals, transportation while at Cross River Cabins,
- * Any equipment required and accommodation is based on 2 people sharing a cabin
- * All activity costs, transportation while at *Cross River Mountain Retreat*
- *Transportation to and from Banff (Calgary airport pick-ups at extra cost)

HIKING IN MOROCCO - JBEL TOUBKAL - GUIDED CAMPING EXPEDITIONS -

Huge escarpments, deep gorges and flat-topped summits characterise the Atlas mountain range in North Africa. It runs for 1,000 miles all the way from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. It is just south of the great red city of Marrakech, the third largest town in Morocco, that the Atlas is at its most spectacular. In a tiny section of this chain, just nine miles long, is some of the most appealing mountain walking country anywhere. This is where the Toubkal Massif rises to a lofty 4,167 metres), where there are fine ridge traverses, challenging scree slopes, and where remote Berber villages cling to the terraced hillsides.

With all these aspects of the mountain walking experience, plus ease of accessibility, it is not surprising that this region is increasingly popular. While we will tackle the non-technical ascent of Toubkal, a highlight of any trek in the range, our main aim is to pursue a circular route, which will take us into more isolated valleys and across less frequented passes than most walkers will experience on their standard march up Toubkal.

This is not, however, a wilderness experience. Even in the remote valleys we will come upon tiny Berber settlements and villages where we maybe welcomed with hot, mint tea, the traditional drink. The hospitality of the Berbers is historically legendary and although we will admit that tourism has had some impact upon this, there will be opportunities to observe this friendliness close at hand. Apart from our day reaching the summit of Toubkal and the long previous day over the Tizi-n'Ouanoums pass, you will find most days are straightforward and enjoyable, with plenty of time for photography, or chilling out with a book!

Regular departures all year round - Ask for a copy of our Sherpa brochure now – call 1800 331 582

Discount flights to Morocco are now available from Atlas Blue Airlines – see their website www.atlas-blue.com for details of services between Marrakech and Agadir to London and several other European capitals.

AUSTRALIAN SMALL GROUP WALKING HOLIDAYS - NEW FOR 2005

FLINDERS RANGES & THE HEYSEN TRAIL - 7-day easy/moderate walking & farm stay accommodation.

The Flinders Ranges are a spectacular and rugged range to the north of Adelaide, a part of Australia's unique outback. They are traversed by the HeySEN Trail, a long distance walking trail stretching over 1,500 kilometres through South Australia's best walking country.

For our walks we select the most interesting and scenic sections, visiting historic mines and settlers ruins, Aboriginal rock carvings and cave paintings. We walk through deep gorges of red quartzite, under towering bluffs and to hidden springs and rock pools.

We visit the crater-like formation of Wilpena Pound, an important feature in Aboriginal mythology, historic Blinman, and the ruins of Kanyaka Homestead. Sightings of euros, red kangaroos, emus and flocks of colourful parrots are common.

We stay at an historic, outback, pastoral property and experience this very Australian lifestyle. We walk without packs and return to soft beds, hot showers and good food each night. This is the landscape that inspired Sir Hans HeySEN, our most famous artist.

Included: Transport (ex Adelaide), accommodation, entry fees, all meals, wine, and guide.

2005			
09/04/05 to 15/04/05 from Adelaide	\$1290.00	02/07/05 to 08/07/05 from Adelaide	\$1290.00
17/09/05 to 23/09/05 from Adelaide	\$1290.00	03/10/05 to 09/10/05 from Adelaide	\$1290.00

2006	
24/04/06 to 30/04/06 from Adelaide	\$1350.00

KANGAROO ISLAND WALKING - 5-days easy walking with farm stay accommodation

Situated just off the South Australian coast, Kangaroo Island is world famous for its superb coastline, its prolific and easily observed wildlife and its wide range of endemic plant species and bushland habitats. It is still a wild and unspoilt place. Wildflowers are found in every season, and we can stroll along a beach, which is home to a large breeding colony of sea lions: a truly unique experience. Our Kangaroo Island holiday combines visits to the island's major attractions and walking in this natural wonderland.

From our comfortable farm accommodation we set off to walk along rugged cliff tops and pristine beaches. We visit Seal Bay, Kelly Hill Caves; walk along the South West River and to the dramatic mouth of Rocky River. We visit lonely, historic lighthouses, the Remarkable Rocks and the incredibly tame native animals at Rocky River.

On our travels we see Kangaroos, Tammar Wallabies, Emus, Echidnas, Koalas, the once endangered Cape Barren Geese, Possums and Fairy Penguins. Spotlighting animals at night is a feature of this tour.

Included: Transport ex Adelaide, ferry, entry fees, accommodation, all meals, wine, and guide.

2005			
25/03/05 to 29/03/05 from Adelaide	\$1230.00	04/04/05 to 08/04/05 from Adelaide	\$1230.00
21/05/05 to 25/05/05 from Adelaide	\$1230.00	24/09/05 to 28/09/05 from Adelaide	\$1230.00
29/10/05 to 02/11/05 from Adelaide	\$1230.00		

2006			
11/03/06 to 15/03/06 from Adelaide	\$1230.00	14/04/06 to 18/04/06 from Adelaide	\$1290.00
17/05/06 to 21/05/06 from Adelaide	\$1290.00		

SKETCHING & PAINTING AT FLINDERS RANGES - 8-days easy walking with accommodation

The Flinders Ranges have inspired artists since the first explorers traversed them in the 1840's. The shapes of the ancient ranges, the majestic river red gums and the ever-changing colours of distant hills and quartzite cliffs reflect the character of the Australian Outback.

We stay in farm accommodation on a large Flinders Ranges sheep station, where Pat Waters will provide instruction. Pat has a degree in Fine Art Painting, thirty years teaching experience and is a practising artist who exhibits regularly in Melbourne and Gippsland. Together with her husband Mick she takes study tours to Europe and has also taken tours to Indonesia and within Australia. They have recently established the Briagolong School of fine Art in Gippsland, Victoria. Pat has a great love and respect for the Australian landscape and has worked with it for many years in her own painting, drawing and printmaking.

29/05/04 to 06/06/04 from Adelaide \$1630.00p/p (Single Supplement \$68 if available)

WILPENA POUND & ARKARoola WALK - Easy/moderate walking with twin-share accommodation in motel rooms with en suite facilities.

Stretching 420 kilometres northwards into the arid heart of Australia, the Flinders Ranges are famous for their rugged mountain scenery. They have the red and purple colours of the Australian Outback and some of the oldest rocks on earth; about 1400 million years old.

There are rocky bluffs, tree-lined gorges, shady pools, majestic river red gums, and diverse flora. They are home to kangaroos, euros, wallabies, emus, colourful parrots, kites and eagles.

The Aboriginal people have lived there for thousands of years and left rock carvings, cave paintings and stone implements. Their dreaming stories interpret the landscape in a mythical way.

This tour explores two quite different parts of the Flinders.

Wilpena Pound is a huge basin-like formation in the heart of the Flinders. It was formed by massive folding of the earth's crust, and now dramatic cliffs of red sandstone surround a flat park-like woodland of native pines and river red gums. The Aboriginal people have important dreaming stories about Wilpena Pound.

To the north, Arkaroola – Mt Painter Sanctuary is the most rugged part of the Ranges! Here, volcanic rocks mix with sedimentary, creating granite peaks, deep ravines, and beautiful waterholes, which attract the desert wildlife. It is rich in Aboriginal culture and mining history.

The Ridge Top Tour in specially constructed, open-top, four-wheel drive vehicles, is one of the most rugged and spectacular journeys in the world.

2005
20/08/05 to 26/08/05 from Adelaide \$1865.00

THE GAMMON RANGES & IGA WARTA - 7-days of moderate walking with camping

Each year we have a few people who want to join us on a trip into this rugged, northern part of the Flinders Ranges. It is rough, rocky walking, but very spectacular.

The area is dominated by the red quartzites of the Gammon Plateau, which is cut by the spectacular gorges we will be exploring. In this arid region, these deeply shaded chasms contain precious waterholes and can support lush fern grottoes.

The ranges are of great significance to the Adnyamathana people who still live in the area and we will do a bush-tucker walk and have a traditional meal with the people at Iga Warta. It is a powerful experience and an excellent introduction to the area. We will only be offering one Gammons trip to our mailing list clients this coming year. This is a vehicle-

supported camping trip. We only carry day-packs while walking. We walk into Bunyip Chasm, McKinley Springs and the beautiful Weetootla Gorge where we look for the rare yellow-footed rock wallaby. We will also explore the large gallery of Aboriginal rock carvings at Chambers Gorge. If you enjoy rough, isolated walking and want to explore a very rewarding part of the Flinders, ask us for the "Gammons" Fact Sheet.

Included: Transport ex Adelaide, camping equipment, entry fees, all meals, wine, and guide.

2004
12/07/04 to 18/07/04 from Adelaide \$1055.00

AUSTRALIA'S COAST TO COAST WALK - 3-days moderate walking with accommodation

Join us for three days of spectacular walking across the beautiful Fleurieu Peninsula. Beginning on the pristine beach of Myponga, we ramble through native bush, forest reserve and green farmland on our way to Encounter Bay.

Following South Australia's premier long distance walking trail, The Heysen Trail, and quiet back roads to walk from "coast to coast". We carry only daypacks. Your luggage is transferred while you walk.

Included: All transport (ex Adelaide), accommodation, meals, wine, support vehicle and guide.

2005
23/04/05 to 25/04/05 from Adelaide \$535.00 14/05/05 to 16/05/05 from Adelaide \$565.00
22/10/05 to 24/10/05 from Adelaide \$565.00

2006
21/04/06 to 23/04/06 from Adelaide \$565.00 13/05/06 to 15/05/06 from Adelaide \$595.00

AUSTRALIA FOR WALKERS - 12-days moderate walking with accommodation

This tour explores the most beautiful walking areas of southeastern Australia. From the spectacular harbour city of Sydney we travel to walk in the Blue Mountains National Park exploring ancient rainforest, waterfalls, spectacular lookouts and a colony of glow-worms.

We travel to Canberra to walk through the city parks and then to the Kosciusko National Park to walk through alpine meadows to the summit of Mount Kosciusko, Australia's highest point.

We drive via the scenic Alpine Way to the Bogong High Plains in northeastern Victoria and walk through snow gum woodland and fields of alpine flowers to historic pioneer's huts. On the Mount Buffalo Plateau, we walk through massive granite outcrops to waterfalls and viewpoints before ending our tour in Melbourne.

Included: Accommodation, all transport, most meals, wine, entry fees and guide.

2005
23/01/05 to 03/02/05 from Sydney \$2750.00 19/11/05 to 30/11/05 from Melbourne \$2890.00

2006
23/01/06 to 03/02/06 from Sydney \$2890.00
15/03/06 to 26/03/06 from Melbourne \$2890.00 (Commonwealth Games)

ALPINE RAMBLE VICTORIA'S BOGONG PLAINS - 8-days of easy/moderate walking with accommodation

When the snows melt, Victoria's Bogong High Plains become a wonderland of mountain streams and alpine wildflowers. The mountain air is cool and fresh; the mountain scenery is spectacular!

Our tour is based at a modern Falls Creek ski lodge and each day we set out to explore a different part of this mountain grandeur; returning each evening to hot showers, gourmet meals and soft beds. We hike through shady forests, across alpine meadows, into snow gum woodlands and visit picturesque huts built by the pioneer cattlemen of the High Plains.

In the evening you may wish to try trout fishing, play tennis or simply relax in the lodge lounge.

Included: Transport, twin/share accommodation, all meals, wine, entry fees, and guide.

2005
05/02/05 to 12/02/05 from Melbourne \$1325.00 26/12/06 to 02/01/06 from Melbourne \$1390.00

2006
18/02/06 to 25/02/06 from Melbourne \$1390.00

HISTORIC HUTS RAMBLE - BOGONG HIGH PLAINS - 5-days easy/moderate walking with accommodation

Encounter mountain history and a wonderful array of wildflowers on easy walks into several old cattlemen's huts on the Bogong High Plains. The oldest, Wallace's Hut, dates back to 1889 and is classified by the National Trust. These rustic old buildings in their settings amongst snowgums, provide fascinating destinations for our walks. Walk with day packs only; no big climbs but fantastic views. A great introduction to the Alpine National Park. We stay in a comfortable lodge in Falls Creek.

Included: Transport ex Melbourne, twin/share accommodation, all meals, all entry fees, and guide.

2005
05/02/05 to 09/02/05 from Melbourne \$860.00 26/12/05 to 30/12/05 from Melbourne \$895.00

2006
18/02/06 to 22/02/06 from Melbourne \$895.00

ALPINE NATIONAL PARK - BOGONG TRAVERSE - 8-days moderate/hard walking - camping & Accommodation

One of Australia's best summer walks! Enjoy 360-degree views as we traverse Victoria's three highest peaks located in the Alpine National Park. An area of outstanding natural beauty with lush fern gullies, tall alpine ash forest growing to 80 metres, and above the snowline, carpets of wildflowers and the sculptured forms of ancient snowgums. Historic cattlemen's huts, bubbling streams and tiny waterfalls punctuate our route. Packs are carried on this tour, but pack weight is kept minimal (about 12kgs), as we collect extra food at our lodge nights en route. Walks average 15 kilometers per day. Three nights lodge accommodation; 4 nights bush camping.

Included: Transport ex Melbourne, accommodation, camping equipment, all meals, wine, all entry fees, and guide.

2005
05/02/05 to 12/02/05 from Melbourne \$1420.00 26/12/05 to 02/01/06 from Melbourne \$1490.00

2006
18/02/06 to 25/02/06 from Melbourne \$1490.00

KOSCIUSKO EXPLORER - 7-days easy/moderate walking with accommodation

This is Australia's highest alpine region and the mountain views are unsurpassed!

We stay in a modern ski lodge in the picturesque Thredbo Alpine Village and walk each day in the Kosciusko National Park. There are hundreds of kilometres of walking tracks to choose from, taking us through expanses of alpine wildflowers, to glacial lakes perched high in the ranges, through snowgum woodland and wooded valleys. We will discover historic huts and mining relics, streams and cascades, and areas of spectacular outcrops. One path will take us to the summit of Mt. Kosciusko, Australia's highest at 2228 metres.

Rugged, yet fragile, this is one of our most important and beautiful National Parks.

Included: Twin share accommodation, all meals, wine, entry fees, guide and local transport.

2004

19/01/04 to 25/01/03 from Thredbo \$1335.00

THE FOLLOWING WALKS CAN BE ARRANGED ON DEMAND FOR GROUPS OF 4 OR MORE

THE BEST OF THE GRAMPIANS WALKING - 6-days easy/moderate walking & farm stay accommodation

The beautiful Grampians rise abruptly from the surrounding plains of Victoria's western districts. Their rock formations, towering cliffs, and the diversity of their flora and fauna have attracted visitors and walkers since the 1860s.

Alternating high rocky ridges and wooded valleys have created a wide range of habitats. The park contains almost one third of Victoria's native flora species, many of them endemic and endangered. There are also over seventy known sites of Aboriginal rock art in this area that the indigenous people call Gariwerd.

Our tour explores a different feature each day; the fantastic rock formations of the Wonderland, moist and shady fern gullies and waterfalls. We spend one day walking up to one of the best lookouts in the area and another day walking to some of the Aboriginal painting sites. We see kangaroos, koalas, possums, colourful birdlife, and wild deer.

We stay on a pastoral property in the picturesque Mafeking Valley, scene of the last gold rush in Victoria in 1900. This tour may be joined in The Grampians.

Included: Transport ex Melbourne, accommodation, all meals, wine, entry fees, and guide.

BEST OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS - 7-days moderate walking with accommodation

The Blue Mountains provide some of the best day walking in Eastern Australia. The choice of well-maintained tracks is excellent.

Ecologically rich and diverse, there are also links to Aboriginal history and European settlement. Over millions of years, major rivers have carved deep valleys, sheer escarpments, and sculptured rock.

Our walks take in the famous lookouts of the plateau-edge, valleys of superb eucalypt forest, narrow canyons and the deep ferny shade of rainforest. We walk through the Blue Gum Forest, explore the Valley of the Waters, the fascinating Glow Worm Tunnel in the Wolgan River valley, take afternoon tea at the Hydro-Majestic, visit the home of Norman Lindsay, walk to magnificent waterfalls, and the Three Sisters.

We visit some of the fabulous private gardens at Mount Wilson and the Botanical Gardens of Mount Tomah. Our tours are scheduled to see either the glorious autumn colours or the spring wildflowers and massed rhododendrons - definitely the best of the Blue Mountains. Accommodation is in a comfortable guesthouse or lodge.

Included: Transport ex Sydney, accommodation, all meals, wine, entry fees, and guide.

TASMANIA FOR WALKERS - 9-days moderate walk with accommodation

This tour combines touring to Tasmania's most beautiful scenery, with walking in the Island's best walking venues.

Starting in Launceston, we explore the dramatic Cataract Gorge before traveling to Cradle Mountain - Lake St. Clair National Park. It protects some magnificent alpine scenery with numerous lakes and mountain peaks. We select the best walks including a section of the Overland Track - one of Australia's best known walking routes. We travel through rain forest to the West Coast town of Strachan and via Queenstown to Mt. Field National Park, the oldest and most popular in Tasmania. The Tarn Shelf walk is outstanding!

We travel into the rugged South West to Strathgorden and walk a rain-forest trail, visit the famous Salamanca market in Hobart and walk in the historic settlements of Richmond and Port Arthur. The tour ends in Hobart, which has easy onward connections.

Included: Twin share accommodation, all transport between Launceston and Hobart, entry fees, most meals, and guide.

HIDDEN GORGE - 3-days of moderate walking with camping

Hidden Gorge lies in the Mount Remarkable National Park, amidst some of the most spectacular scenery in the lower Flinders Ranges. It is a small rugged area cut by the Alligator and Mambray Creeks, which have eroded deep, spectacular gorges into the red quartzite.

There are towering red cliffs, secluded waterfalls, ferns, groves of native pines, sugar-gum forest and ribbons of mighty river red gums along the watercourses. Picturesque waterholes attract native birds and the rare yellow-footed rock wallaby.

The diversity of habitats supports a greater abundance of wildflowers than found in the central and northern Flinders.

This tour is an easy introduction to pack carrying with one day being pack free while we explore the narrow chasm of the Hidden Gorge. You carry a moderate pack for about 2.5 hours on the first & third days.



CYCLING IN SPAIN – ALONG THE CAMION DE SANTIAGO

Without any doubt, the best cycling tour in Spain for any rider who wants to experience the tradition and history of this ancient land is along the pilgrimage route the *Camino de Santiago*.

Travelling in small groups on set departure dates, our itinerary offers great cycling with delightful scenery dotted with historic monuments, pilgrims' hospitals, sanctuaries and shrines. Our route runs through the north of Spain with breathtaking landscapes, typical and traditional villages each night. We offer a choice of accommodation often staying in comfortable 3 or 4-star inns, hotels or Paradores. We savour a rich Spanish gastronomy of traditional regional cuisine and excellent wines.

With expert guides, mini-bus support and carefully chosen bicycles the route offers easy to moderate cycling suitable for riders of any experience.

Departs: May 15th, July 18th, September 11th or October 17th 2005.

Extra departures available with a minimum of four participants - at any time of year

Costs: 4-star itinerary - AU\$3060 per person (twin share) Single Supplement AU\$440

3-star itinerary - AU\$2340 per person (twin share) Single Supplement AU\$270

Duration: 7 days / 6 nights

What's included:

- * Coach transfer to and from the local airport
- * 6-nights' in 3-star hotel accommodation with breakfasts each day
- * Lunches on 5 days & dinners each night with drinks (only farewell dinner on 3-star route)
- * Experienced guides with full minibus back up
- * Admission fees to monuments
- * Welcome pack with information, route guides & maps
- * Luggage transfer each day

Other mountain bike and self guided routes available in Andalucia – ask for details

RENDOLA – HORSE RIDING IN THE CHIANTI FOOTHILL NEAR FLORENCE, ITALY

Situated at a thousand feet above sea level on the slopes of the Chianti hills, it has splendid views over the Arno valley. Guests are lodged in Jenny's home, a comfortable Tuscan farmhouse. There are seven bedrooms, all with private bathrooms, a large dining room and a sitting room with fireplace, plenty of books and a music library. At mealtimes guests sit at a long table together with their hosts. Pietro the cook prepares delicious Tuscan dishes, accompanied by Chianti wine. The atmosphere is relaxing and friendly. Rides out for small groups are organized daily, quiet ones for novices and longer, faster rides for the more experienced.

The surrounding hills, with their olive-groves, vineyards and extensive woodlands offer an endless variety of itineraries. In Spring and Autumn guided rides in the Chianti Classico area are offered, between Florence and Siena for fit and experienced riders to explore on horseback this beautiful, unspoilt countryside, visiting abbeys, castles, Romanesque churches and medieval villages. Pietro will meet you at lunchtime with a splendid picnic and accompany you in the evening to your inn or farmhouse.

The stables are situated behind the house, and the horses graze daily in the surrounding paddocks. There are eighteen at your disposal, mostly Italian bred and carefully chosen to suit all levels of ability. The saddles are English style and of excellent quality and condition. Instructors and guides are all experienced and friendly.

In the ring surrounded by olive-groves small groups of beginners can take their first lessons and the more expert riders can improve their flat work and jumping. Those who desire may also help to groom and feed the horses, and take lessons in elementary horsemanship.

Costs: Daily full-board (all meals) with simple farm (ensuite) accommodation \$190 per person per night.

Riding costs (paid locally) Euro 15 per hour (2-3 hours per day recommended).

AIRLINE NOTICE - SECURITY JOKES COULD BE BAD FOR YOUR WEALTH

Australia's new aviation security laws that come into effect today should put an end to jokes about the 'bomb in my friend's suitcase,' according to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services, John Anderson.

The new laws mean many changes for Australia's aviation industry, particularly with the extension of the security regime to more than 140 smaller regional airports, but most of these will not be noticed by the travelling public.

However, the new laws mean that aviation security officials and law enforcement officers will no longer distinguish between a joke threat or what might be a genuine threat to Australia's airports, airlines or aviation industry workers.

"These sort of jokes distress passengers and staff. They are expensive to deal with and cause delays, because we have to take them seriously and carry out searches just in case they're not, in fact, jokes," Mr Anderson said.

"If you are stupid enough to make joke threats about aviation security, you won't just miss your flight. You could end up with a \$5,500 fine and a criminal record - and that's no joke.

"Travellers at regional airports will notice that new security arrangements are being put in place as a result of the new laws, including new signage, fencing and lighting.

"An extra four regional airports - Hervey Bay in Queensland, and Ravensthorpe, Argyle and Learmonth in Western Australia - will be installing full passenger and carry-on baggage screening in the coming months.

"Every other regional airport that handles regular public transport flights will be required to train their staff in the use of hand-held wands. The Government is issuing wands to all these airports, so they can begin clearing passengers immediately if our security experts consider it necessary," Mr Anderson said.

There are a few simple rules that travellers can follow to make the security process as straightforward as possible. Fact sheets and a list of the airports and airlines with approved transport security programs can be accessed at www.dotars.gov.au/transsec/atsa/index.htm

Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details, travel brochures and reservations

- Call Toll free 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: info@outdoortravel.com.au
- Web: www.outdoortravel.com.au
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright 3741
- Travel Agent Licence No 31102

ORDER YOUR NEW TRAVEL BROCHURES FOR 2005

Available now from Outdoor Travel

Please tick below & email, fax or post your brochure request & we will send the new brochures to you:

-) **SHERPA EUROPE INN TO INN** - Independent self-guided walking or cycling trips - France, Switzerland, Walkers Britain & most countries of Europe - Worldwide
-) **ATG OXFORD - FOOTLOOSE & FREEWHEELING & WEEKAWAY** - Independent & Small Group Guided Walking &/or Cycling - Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Greece & UK
-) **CAMINO DE SANTIAGO** – Walking or cycling the Way of St James (France or Spain)
-) **WALKING SAFARI COMPANY** - Quality small group themed walking holidays in France or Spain – with a donkey
-) **CROWN BLUE LINE** - Self-skippered Canal Boats in France, Holland, Italy, Germany, Scotland, England & Ireland
-) **GO BARGING** - Quality All inclusive Hotel Barges in France, Germany, UK & Ireland
-) **CANAL & CO** – Hotel Barges in most regions of France and Holland
-) **FRENCH CYCLING HOLIDAYS** – Small group holidays in the most popular wine growing regions of France
-) **ABEL TASMAN** – Small group accommodated walking holidays in New Zealand – open all year round

OTHER – Please specify:

NEW ZEALAND WALKING / CYCLING

-) Milford Track Guided or Freedom Walk or the 8-day Ultimate Hike
-) Grand Traverse
-) Hollyford Valley Walk
-) Tongariro Trek
-) Stewart Island Kiwi Trek
-) Routeburn Walk
-) NZ Cycling Tours

AIRFARES – Please quote for flights as follows: From:To: Class:
Departing:One-way / Return (please indicate)

NAME: **DAYTIME CONTACT:**

ADDRESS: **P'CODE:** **EMAIL ADDRESS:**

OTHER REQUESTS:

CALL OUTDOOR TRAVEL ON 1800 331 582

Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details, travel brochures and reservations

- Call Toll free 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: info@outdoortravel.com.au
- Web: www.outdoortravel.com.au
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright 3741
- Travel Agent Licence No 31102