



Spring is here!

Like every quarter I get amazed that another season is already upon us. Last quarter has passed us by so quickly and we are now waiting for the AFL results. As a very keen Collingwood supporter I am hoping we get past the Preliminary Finals and make it to the big one... Time will tell.

September is our 30th Birthday Month!!! We are very proud that we have been in Business for this period of time, although I have only been here 28 of those 30 years. It really does not feel that long and I would like to take this chance to thank each and everyone one of our amazing clients. Without your support and referrals we would not be celebrating this milestone and I hope that we have many more years of being able to assist making your dream holiday a reality.

It has been a very busy time in the office with all of us travelling or taking a break to get ready for our next busy time of the year with the Early Birds deals for 2018. The airfares are all starting to come out now and most of the European operators have their tours and cruises available for booking.

Our Travel Expo is coming up next month, make sure that you "Save the Date" and come along to see what new destinations and deals are available to you. This is really a fantastic opportunity to come and speak to the Touring Companies direct. We have over 30 operators that will be in attendance on the day, some who you would have seen in previous years, some that haven't been for awhile and we are very excited to have some new operators that will have some on trend destinations for you to find out about.

We hope that you enjoy our update and have a chance to join us on Saturday 13th October for another great Expo day.

Happy Reading !

Jacqui Ingram

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GRAND PACIFIC INFORMATION DAY:

DATE: Friday 26TH  
October  
TIME: 1.00pm– 3.00pm  
LOCATION: Wedge Sale

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Madagascan Children at play



Madagascar Sunscreen



## Madagascar - September 2018

In September I was lucky enough to visit Madagascar. Located just off from Africa it certainly is a destination that I was interested to travel to.

Very well known for its Lemurs and some unique bird life, Madagascar really did surprise me on many levels. The Scenery was beautiful: Everything from rain forests, to savannah type open plains, rice fields to very rocky areas where you can experience rock climbing.

The Country is quite poor and as such the roads can be a challenge in certain areas. On arrival we had a 160 km drive which took almost 5 hours.

Madagascar certainly is not for everyone but if you are an intrepid traveller who is after something quite different it might be the place for you.

They have some great beaches with amazing diving, hotels are normally classed as 3 star but offer an excellent standard of comfort, put all this together and you have a very different and interesting itinerary...

To get to Madagascar I flew from Perth to Mauritius where we had an overnight stay before flying to Madagascar the next day. Flying time from Perth to Mauritius is 8 hours 40 mins with another 1 hour 40 min onto Madagascar, the return flight to Perth is much shorter only 6 1/2

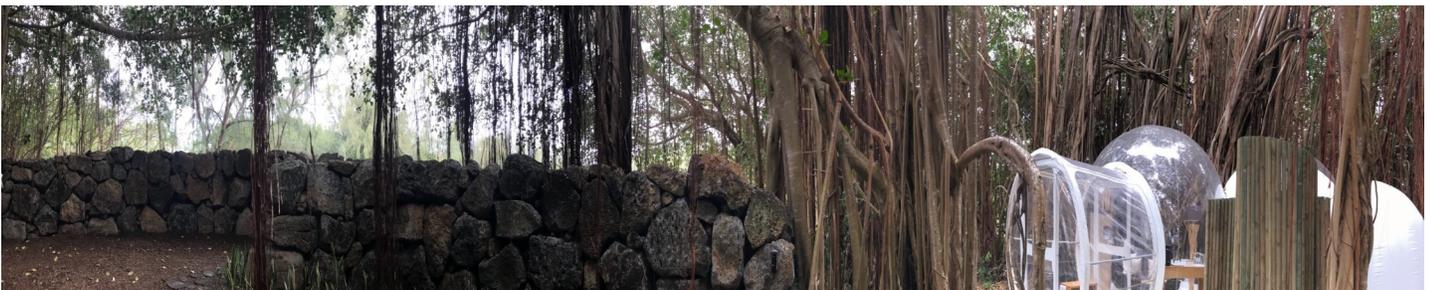
hours due to the tail winds. I would highly recommend having a good 4 or 5 nights in Mauritius on the return if you are wanting a beautiful relaxing beach experience.

Madagascar reminded me very much of Tanzania, Africa 28 years ago, which will give you a little insight into the standard of living. Villages line the main roads with colourful local markets scattered every 20 km or 30 km. Nothing is wasted, and you can see the with locals carrying sacks of coal on their backs or by trolley cars up from one village to the next. Children make their own toys from all sorts of materials and you see children looking after little children while their parents are at work on the farms.

Interesting to note that Madagascar is around the same size as France and has a population of just over 26 million people. It is heavily populated for an Island of its size and its wonderful to see the locals are very much into protecting their forests and local Fauna and the many species of animals that are endemic to the Island. Tourism is certainly going to help with the protection of the forests and the unique animals, as this income is something that can be used to educate and help the locals with best practice in order to ensure that they protect what Rain Forest remains. The food was excellent with Seafood, Fish and Zebu being the main dish of an evening .

Using Mauritius as the transit point why not make the most of the amazing Island? It is one of my favourite with beautiful beaches, fabulous food, excellent golf courses, incredible hotels and some great shopping. I would certainly suggest at least 4 or 5 nights as a option.

We did a very interesting inspection of a gold Course with very unique, different, WOW factor accommodation I have seen. This accommodation is called a "Bubble Room" and there are 5 of them located on this amazing Golf Course, very private and if you want to have an experience to remember then just 1 night here would be incredible.



## Welcome Tania

Hello It's Tania; the new recruit at Flying Colours Travel. I have 26 years experience in the travel industry and love to make people's travel dreams come true.

My Favourite holiday: I have more than one favourite, from Hang gliding off the cliffs on Ipanema beach, RIO Brazil, Exploring the sensational pyramids in Egypt on the back of a camel at sunset and having a beautiful cheetah named Sylvester walk up to me at Elephant Camp in South Africa and lick my hand.

My Holiday Tips:

\*Have an open mind and enjoy and mix with the locals

\*Respect local customs, remember that you are a guest in their country \*Pack light \*Do not travel without travel insurance \*Don't judge things you see that are different to back home. Instead think about how interesting they are. My Must see cities: Muscat, Cairo, Capetown, Rio Di Janeiro & Vancouver.

Where I've been: Argentina, Brazil, Cook Islands, Fiji, Tahiti, Maldives, New Zealand, Borneo, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China, Thailand, Canada, West coast USA, Oman, Egypt, Dubai, The Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, France, United Kingdom, Italy, Austria, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Southern and Eastern Africa.



*Tania at the Great wall of China*

## Angela's Carnival Fun At Sea

In August I jumped on board the Carnival Spirit for a little 4 night Domestic Cruise from Sydney. We cruised out of Darling Harbour late afternoon and enjoyed views of Sydney's iconic Harbour Bridge and Opera House as the sun was setting. It was now time to start enjoying the ship's facilities and entertainment as we began our cruise. There are plenty of dining options to keep even the fussiest of eaters satisfied on board with dining options to suit everybody's appetite. Dining options include high-class restaurant Nouveau Restaurant, Guy's Burger Joint, Blueguana Mexican Cantina, Carnival's Main Dining room and of course their buffet restaurants. Carnival Spirit also has a selection of bars suited for all moods, from the busy poolside island-inspired RedFrog Rum Bar, to the Alchemy cocktail Bar.

The Carnival Spirit certainly offers plenty of options entertainment for all ages.

There is a wide variety of live music on board from laid-back island rock at the RedFrog Rum Bar to sing-a-longs well into the night at the Piano Bar. Cruising is also an excellent option for families with many entertainment options for children in 'Camp Ocean'. Camp Ocean is dedicated to children between 2–11 year-olds with activities inclusive of toys, games, crafts and videos.

My favourite spot to enjoy our days at sea was the Adults Only Serenity Retreat located Aft on Lido Deck. The Serenity included swaying hammocks, plenty of comfortable deck chairs, a heated outdoor spa and a bar. This area was quiet and a great place to chill and is exclusively for 18+ years.

### **Morton Island**

We stopped at Morton Island for the day. Located just off the coast of Brisbane and known for its Humpback whales viewing. I joined Carnival's onshore excursion to view the Humpback whales which was absolutely amazing, as soon as we disembarked the ship by tender it was straight onto a smaller boat in search of whales.

Before long we were watching two adult whales and an adolescent who was practicing his breaches; such an amazing experience. There are a variety of on-shore excursions to choose from on all voyages that cater for all fitness levels and budgets, if touring isn't your thing you can always choose to simply go ashore and explore on your own.

Often referred to as a resort on the sea, cruising is a wonderful option for everyone. With specials on offer all the time it's always a great time to book a cruise, call in and see what deals are on offer today!

## Mel's African Adventure!

In August I celebrated my 30<sup>th</sup> birthday with a trip to Africa. This has long been at the top of my bucket list and I figured what better time to tick it off. I travelled with Intrepid and did a 15-day camping tour throughout Kenya & Tanzania. First stop Nairobi.

We arrived the day before the tour commenced and had a little free time before the tour commenced. This was easily filled with a day trip to the Africa Fund for Endangered Wildlife's Giraffe Centre and David Sheldrick's Elephant Orphanage. Two great organisations that are really supporting animal welfare in Africa. Our first stop was the Giraffe Centre where we got to feed the Giraffes and for those who were game give them a little kiss (if you placed a food pellet between your lips the giraffe's would grab it from your mouth) followed by the Elephant Orphanage. There were 19 elephants in total when we visited all who's mothers had died either by starvation or poaching. These elephants were rescued from various national parks and are cared for for a few years before being released back into Tsavo National Park. This is a must visit for anyone visiting Nairobi. That night back at our hotel we meet our Intrepid group ready for an early start the next morning.

Day 2, we loaded our bags onto the truck and set off for Lake Nakuru and our first game drive. On arrival we set up our camp before heading into the National Park. Our main goal today was to see some White Rhino's and it wasn't long before we spotted some and found ourselves a mere 10 meters away from two as they wandered through the park. All in all, we saw about a dozen along with plenty of zebra's, pink flamingos, monkeys, eagles, buffalo, gazelles & warthogs. Back at the camp site we had our first meal prepared by our Intrepid chef (who did an amazing job throughout the whole trip) and settled in with a few drinks around a campfire.

Back on the road and we were headed to Lake Naivasha for 2 nights. Here we were very excited to see some hippo's which we did, shortly after arrival on an optional boat ride. We came across 4 to 5 families submerged in the lake with only their heads visible. The following morning, I participated in a Game Walk in Crater Lake Game Sanctuary. This was quite unique, instead of driving through the park we spent our time walking with the animals. We got pretty close to both giraffe's & zebra's who were not bothered by our presence. In the afternoon we headed off to Hell's Gate National Park which was a mixture of a game drive and a hike through the gorge. Here you will find Pride Rock and a number of other landmarks that provided inspiration for the Lion King movie.

Day 5 saw us head in Loita Hills where we were lucky to spend the night in a Masai Village. On arrival we were greeted by the chief and his warriors. We were then taken into the village where we were welcomed by the females with song and dance before being asked to participate. That night we ate dinner around the campfire and listened to the chief talk about their way of life and customs. We sat for hours asking questions and nothing was off limits. The next morning it was time for the warriors to show of their skills. The Masai are known as the 'jumping tribe' which was demonstrated along with chanting, spear and club throwing. Again, we all had the option to join in and participate. This experience really was one of the top highlights of the trip not just for me but for most of the people in my group. It really was amazing to see how these people lived and survived with nothing but the basics. However before long, it was time to board the truck and make our way to Masai Mara National Reserve. Here our campsite was located just outside of the park gates and shortly after arrival we set off on our first game drive. We explained to our driver that we really wanted to see some cats and within half an hour he had found four lioness' for us, not lingering on we then headed off to a heard of Elephants which came right up to the vehicle. Next on the list was a cheetah, time was running out before we had to get back to camp however our driver had heard on the radio of that there were two close by and we made a beeline straight for them. They were by far my favourite animal.





The next morning, we were up early for a full day game drive in the Masai Mara. Our group was split as half went on a sunrise hot air balloon ride while the rest of us were in 4x4's. We had a very eventful morning spotting more lions and another two cheetahs, one of which we saw chase down some prey and make a kill. Once re-joining with the rest of our group we made our way across to the Mara River in hope to see the migration. The first area we came across had no wilder beast however we found plenty of hippos' and a couple of large crocs', along with plenty of skeletal remains. After a picnic lunch we headed further up the river where there were a large group of wilder beasts situated next to the river. Here we parked ourselves for several hours watching them take 1

step forward then 2 steps back. Eventually our persistence paid off and we saw the wilder beasts migrate across the river, something I thought I would only see on a documentary, never in real life. For the rest of the afternoon we were more relaxed on our game drive having seen all but one of the big five and just when we thought things couldn't get any better we came across a pride of Lions feasting on a recent kill. We couldn't believe our eyes.

Day 11 and our tour is starting near the end. Today we set off for the Serengeti National Park where we spent 2 nights camping inside the park with no fences to protect us from the animals. After setting up camp we headed off on an afternoon game drive. Our main goal was to see a Leopard as this was the only Big 5 animal we were yet to see, unfortunately by the end of the day this was still the case although we did come across 2 lion cubs with an older sibling waiting for mum to come back with some food. We could have watched them for hours but eventually it started to get dark and it was time to head back to camp. On arrival we had a very strict safety briefing before sitting by the camp fire and listening out for animals close by. Those who were game walked the perimeter of camp with our headlights trying to spot some eyes. We came across a number of Hyena's but nothing more.

An early start today, but for good reason. We were picked up from camp whilst it was still dark and taken to our awaiting Hot Air Balloon. This was by far the highlight of my entire trip. We glided just above the tree tops over the plains whilst the sun was rising, and the animals were out and about. In the hour we were in the air we saw hundreds of hippos (both in and out of the water), hyena's, gazelle, a cheetah, monkeys and several lions, as well as some truly breathtaking scenery. Upon landing we toasted our flight with a champagne before being taken to our breakfast location for a traditional English breakfast. On the way we passed another 3 lions who were stalking some prey, a truly amazing sight to see. Upon re-joining our group, we spent the rest of the day on a game drive. Starting to get a little anxious as we still hadn't seen a leopard we were rewarded for our patience early afternoon when we came upon a dozen or more vehicles all looking at a tree in the distance. Whoever spotted it must have had the most amazing eyesight as it wasn't easy to distinguish the limbs from tree branches even when we knew what we were looking at, a sleeping leopard, the Big 5 was now complete. Quite aware of how lucky we are as most people never get the chance to see the elusive leopard. We were all very happy arriving into camp that night.

Our last stop was at the Ngorongoro Crater, here we had a morning game drive before a picnic lunch with the hippo's. With over 30,000 animals calling the crater home we were not disappointed. Even if I didn't get to see a black rhino the pink flamingos were pretty awesome.

On a whole my trip really was a once in a lifetime experience. Our Intrepid tour guide, chef and bus driver were fantastic and catered to all our needs. I saw more animals than expected and got closer to them than I ever imagined (even a little too close on some occasions). If you haven't been already, I would highly recommend a trip to Africa.



## Bamurru Plains - Ky

I recently left Victoria's crisp spring weather and spent 3 nights in the Northern Territory with 1 night at the Argus Apartments located in the heart of Darwin and 2 nights at Bamurru Plains located in Swim Creek station.

Argus have One, Two and Three Bedroom Apartments, in addition to the multi-level Four-Bedroom Penthouse Suites which all come with a fully equipped full size kitchen, laundry, two bathrooms and a study desk or office. The Argus Apartments have onsite secured undercover parking, 24 hour reception, a gymnasium & lap pool with spa with complimentary barbeque facility as well as a business centre. Just a short walk away from Darwin's entertainment, restaurant and Waterfront precincts they offer a great accommodation option in Darwin.

Bamurru Plains is a luxury bush retreat situated on Swim Creek station, 10 kms from the border of the Kakadu National Park and just over 100 km east of Darwin. Originally opened in 2006 and is accessed by road or charter flight from Darwin taking either 3 hours or 30 minutes respectively. The 30 minute charter flight from Darwin covers some of the most spectacular wetlands and lands at Swim Creek Station Airstrip. One of the Bamurru staff will be there to greet you on arrival to the airstrip and transfer you to the lodge - a journey time of approximately 25 minutes.



If you chose to travel by road the first hour and three quarters of the drive is on sealed tarmac road, the last hour and a quarter are on unsealed public and station roads.

Bamurru Plains is closed from November until February each year during the early months of the wet season when weather conditions are particularly humid. Between February until April, Bamurru Plains is an exclusive fishing lodge. Alternatively the 'normal' travel season operates 1st May until 31st October. Similar to the Africa style tents, these 10 ensuite luxury glamping tents contain a private toilet (no long drops), shower and each lodge has 180 degree views of the floodplains and savannah. Each of them have been built with privacy in mind and to take advantage of the spectacular views across the wetlands. Bamurru is an all inclusive property: breakfast, lunch, dinner and a select open bar (wines, beers and soft drinks) is included and this is generally accessed on a self-service basis.

There is a range of premium wines and spirits available for purchase. All guests dine together at the communal table to share and compare the sights of the day.

On average people stay 3 nights to give you 2 full days allowing time for a day trip to Arnhem Land or Kakadu and 4 nights 3 full days will allow time to sit back and relax in and around the camp.

To name drop the likes of the CEO of Ford Australia and the sister in law of the Duke of Cambridge Prince William, Pippa Middleton and her husband James have stayed here.

Bamurru Plains is a 'camp' and the sights and sounds of the bush are unique and not for everyone. It's totally off the grid: No TV, CD players, or internet/wifi.

If you want to experience the safari lodge style of Africa but can't fly the distance of Africa maybe a flight to the Australian outback is for you.





GRAND PACIFIC TOURS

# NZ

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**Time** 1.00 - 3.00 pm

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To express your interest please call 03 5144 3199  
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