



Travel Daily

AUGUST 2024

ADVENTURE SPECIAL REPORT

FEATURING

RESOURCE: AGENT ADVENTURE GUIDE

REVEALED: LATEST TRENDS IN ADVENTURE

NEW, NOW, NEXT: EMERGING DESTINATIONS

Where to next?



Small group travel
in more than
100 countries.



Trips in over
100 countries



Expert
local leaders



Small
group sizes



Responsible
travel



Contents

18

FEATURE: CHANGING THE GAME

Travel Daily editor Adam Bishop analyses the evolution of the adventure sector.



11

IN THE NEWS

The latest updates from the world of adventure travel.



24

FEATURE: A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

From Uzbekistan to Colombia, here are the newest destinations on adventure bucket lists.



Contents



42

ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRENDS

From the rise of high-end adventures to a renewed focus on Africa, here's what you need to know about adventure today.



29

ADVENTURE TRAVEL GUIDE

A practical tool for travel agents to share with customers.

44

Q&A WITH SHANNON STOWELL

Adventure Travel Trade Association CEO
Shannon Stowell on industry evolution.



Travel Daily

traveldaily.com.au
traveldaily.co.nz

Travel Daily is part of the Business Publishing Group family of publications.

Travel Daily is Australasia's leading travel industry cruise publication.

EDITORIAL

Associate Publisher - Jo-Anne Hui-Miller
Editor - Adam Bishop
Deputy Editor - Matt Lennon
Journalists - Janie Medbury, Myles Stedman
Designer - Katherine Gullotto
Publisher - Damian Francis

info@traveldaily.com.au

Travel Daily is a publication of Travel Daily Pty Ltd ABN 73 123 041 485. All content fully protected by copyright. Please obtain written permission to reproduce any material. While every care has been taken in the preparation of the newsletter no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions. Information is published in good faith to stimulate independent investigation of the matters canvassed. Responsibility for editorial comment is taken by Damian Francis.

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Head of Sales & Marketing - Sean Harrigan
Advertising - Laura Aghajanian & Dante Muranty
advertising@traveldaily.com.au

HEAD OF OPERATIONS & CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Anna Piper

ACCOUNTS

accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
PO Box 1010 Epping NSW 1710 Australia
Tel: (AU) +61 2 8007 6760 or (NZ) 0800 799 220
Tel: (Int'l) 1300 799 220

Travel Daily
travelBulletin

business events news

Pharmacy
Daily



Partners

17
DESTINATION CANADA
 Winter magic in the Great White North.

23
TOURISM NEW ZEALAND
 Explore New Zealand on your dream self-famil.



02
INTREPID
 The original adventure travel experts.



07
AURORA EXPEDITIONS
 Small ships, big adventures to Antarctica, the Arctic and beyond.



10
ABERCROMBIE AND KENT
 Africa is calling with tailor-made safaris on offer.

Partners

12

BENCH AFRICA

The African safari specialists since 1969.



13

DISCOVERY RESORTS

Explore more with 30% off stays.



15

INTREPID

Small group travel in more than 100 countries.



20

DESTINATION CANADA

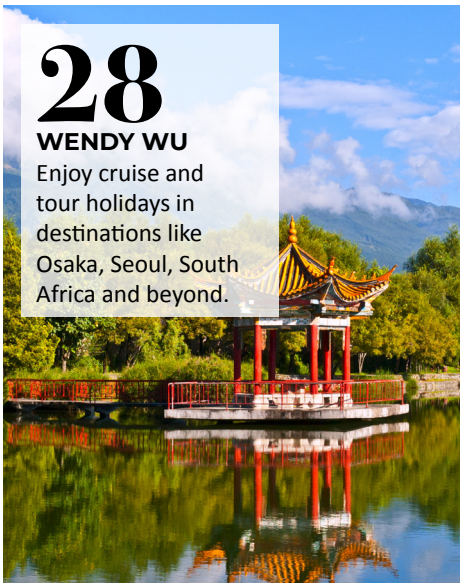
Wild bear encounters.



28

WENDY WU

Enjoy cruise and tour holidays in destinations like Osaka, Seoul, South Africa and beyond.



32

EXPLORE WORLDWIDE

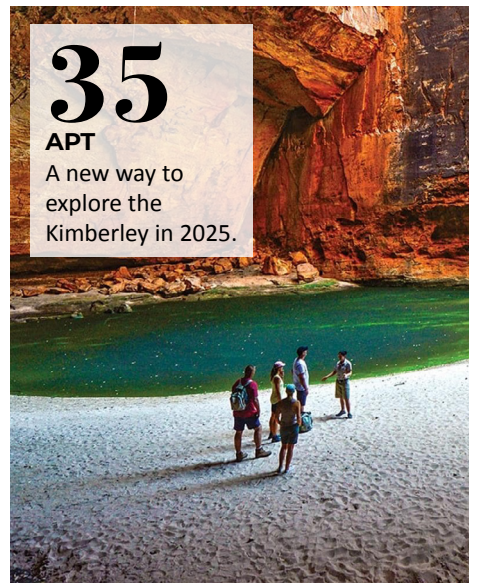
From over 350 small group adventures to more than 100 destinations, the world is your oyster.



35

APT

A new way to explore the Kimberley in 2025.



Small Ships Big Adventures

Antarctica, the Arctic & Beyond

Book your clients on an adventure like no other with Aurora Expeditions, where our small ships promise big adventures to Antarctica, the Arctic and beyond.

Expeditioners can discover the untamed beauty of our planet's most remote corners, such as the icy expanses of Antarctica or the Arctic wonders of Greenland, Svalbard and the Northwest Passage, travelling with no more than 130 passengers to the polar regions.

Our carefully curated voyages offer immersive activities, more time off ship and thoughtful enrichment programs, all accompanied by an industry leading Expedition Team.



Positive Impact
Travel



Small Purpose-
Built New Ships



More Time
Off-Ship



World-Leading
Activity Program



Education &
Enrichment



Guide to Traveller
Ratio 1:7



Unlock our polar adventures with Air Credit up to US\$2,000* pp, PLUS up to 20% off* on select voyages to Antarctica 2024/25 and Arctic 2025. Hurry offer ends 30 September 2024!

*Terms and conditions apply.

For more information and to book contact Aurora Expeditions:
AU: 1800 637 688 | NZ: 0800 447 042 | auroraexpeditions.com.au

Editor's Letter



Those who know me well can attest to the fact that I'm not much of an adrenaline hound. I am one of those annoyingly cautious members of society who has an incessant need to crunch the numbers when it comes to risk assessment.

And while said crunching of high-octane activities like bungee jumping will tell you clearly that it's actually a very safe pursuit, the overlay of phobic visions of elastic cords snapping (and spines) still often sees me sitting on the sidelines.

Thankfully adventure travel is no longer the exclusive domain of people akin to Indiana Jones hurtling at extremely high speeds through ravines and down waterfalls. The market has matured greatly in recent times to cater for yellow-bellied, latte sippers like me.

While the more extreme activities are still alive and well within the segment, it's reassuring to know that the term "adventure" has evolved to include a slower pace, transcending into the world of cultural connections, deep meanings, and mindfulness.

I recently travelled to the Red Centre courtesy of Voyages Indigenous Tourism to enjoy its new Sunrise Journeys experience. Using the incomparable Uluru and the vast red earth as a canvas, laser lights and music dazzled and delighted the senses, offering a storytelling moment for the Anangu people to share with visitors their deep connection with the land.

For me, the new offering was spiritual. To travel to the remote centre of our beautiful country and connect with our First Nations people was indeed, one awesome adventure. It just so happens the adventuring in this case was both educational and psychological, rather than physical.

The Red Centre through this lens represented a brand-new time and space for my mind to explore, as well as feel closer to the cultural roots of the country on the land I too call home. Ultimately, I walked away feeling more centred and cognitively refreshed.

I hope this special report leaves a similar impression on you, and that you can come for the not-so-cyclonic paced journey with me into the intriguing world of adventure travel. ••



Adventures at Mt Norquay Ski Resort, Banff in Canada.

"THE MARKET HAS MATURED GREATLY IN RECENT TIMES TO CATER FOR YELLOW-BELLIED, LATTE SIPPERS LIKE ME."

Adam Bishop
Editor
Travel Daily

Sponsor's Letter



When we delve into what drives Australians to embark on long-haul journeys, particularly to Canada, the quest “to feel a sense of adventure” emerges as a major driver for consideration and booking. The country’s vast and varied landscapes, from towering mountains to expansive wilderness, rivers, and lakes, provide opportunities for outdoor activity and adventure that resonate strongly with Australians.

Our insights reveal that those most interested in adventure travel take pride in their experiences and want to have stories they can share with others. These are the travellers who return home with tales of conquering new challenges, whether it’s navigating the rapids of a wild river or trekking through uncharted terrain. They are not just seeking adrenaline, but an experience that enriches their lives.

For many, adventure lies at the intersection of sports and nature. It’s the combination of physical challenge and natural beauty that provides a sense of

adventure. These travellers are looking for new destinations and experiences and tend to seek out lesser-known or more remote locations and experiences where they can immerse themselves in nature.

Canada’s lesser-explored regions, with their raw beauty and sense of isolation, are particularly attractive to this segment. The thrill of discovering something new, something off-the-beaten path, is a key driver for these travellers. The breathtaking trails of the Rocky Mountains, for instance, offer hikers and mountaineers rugged terrains, alpine meadows, and glacial lakes. Iconic destinations such as Banff and Jasper National Parks provide a range of trails for all levels of adventurers.

Additionally, Canada’s diverse ecosystems are home to an array of wildlife. Adventure seekers can embark on expeditions to spot grizzly bears in British Columbia or go whale watching off the coasts of Newfoundland and Vancouver Island.

The country’s numerous rivers, including the renowned Nahanni River in the Northwest Territories, present thrilling opportunities for whitewater rafting and kayaking.

For those drawn to winter sports, Canada’s world-class destination ski resorts in British Columbia, as well as ski resorts in Alberta and Quebec, deliver extraordinary experiences. Powder-filled slopes and diverse terrains make these locations ideal for skiing, snowboarding, and even heli-skiing adventures.

Canoeing through serene lakes and rivers in places like Algonquin Park in Ontario or the Bowron Lake Circuit in British Columbia offers an idyllic escape into nature. Combined with backcountry camping,



The spectacular Llewellyn Glacier in British Columbia.

“THEY ARE NOT JUST SEEKING ADRENALINE, BUT AN EXPERIENCE.”

these trips allow adventurers to disconnect and reconnect with the wilderness.

Another significant trend we see among adventure travellers is their preference for longer journeys. Unlike the typical tourist, who might favour shorter, more structured holidays, these explorers often embark on trips that stretch over three weeks. This allows them to fully engage with the destination, uncovering its secrets and truly absorbing its essence. For travel agents, this represents an opportunity to craft immersive itineraries that offer depth and variety, meeting the adventurous spirit of these clients.

Like many travellers, adventure travellers are seeking connections - connections with the environment, with local and indigenous cultures, and with themselves. This is where Canada shines, offering sustainable and culturally rich experiences. As the adventure travel market continues to expand, it’s vital for travel agents to stay informed - understanding motivations and trends and aligning product offerings that will meet client needs for adventure and connection, leaving them with memories that last a lifetime. ••

Julie King
Managing Director
Destination Canada - Australia

Abercrombie & Kent

AFRICA IS CALLING

A&K have been pioneering life-changing safaris in Africa since 1962.

Sixty years on, we are the experts in experiential, Tailor-Made Journeys to Africa – adventures that inspire up-close encounters with nature's greatest theatre. From the lily-covered lagoons of the Okavango Delta to the vast horizons of the Serengeti and the thundering roar of Victoria Falls, come face-to-face with abundant wildlife and immerse yourself in the natural world under the careful watch of the continent's finest guides.

With privileged access, hand-picked accommodations, and a long-standing presence on the ground, A&K sets the benchmark for bespoke travel in Africa. No matter your dream, A&K can curate the perfect African journey just for you.



Victoria Falls & Botswana Explorer

On this exhilarating Southern African adventure, view stunning Victoria Falls and experience a thrilling safari in Botswana's pristine Chobe National Park and Okavango Delta. Accompanied by expert safari guides, you will seek out Africa's iconic wildlife including lion, leopard and elephant, and marvel at the incredibly diverse landscapes.

10 days from \$9,995 pp



Cape Town, Kruger & Victoria Falls Explorer

Experience the best of Southern Africa's dramatic scenery, inspiring wildlife, vibrant cuisine and colourful culture. Begin in cosmopolitan Cape Town, one of the world's most beautiful cities, then head out on safari in a wildlife-filled private reserve located nearby Kruger National Park before witnessing the mighty roar of Victoria Falls.

10 days from \$9,975 pp



East Africa Explorer

Venture to the sun-soaked plains of East Africa on an extraordinary journey through Kenya and Tanzania. Enjoy thrilling game drives with expert safari guides among a diverse range of ecosystems, witnessing abundant wildlife and staying in spacious camps and lodges in the region's finest parks and reserves.

10 days from \$11,950 pp

Call 1300 589 717, visit www.abercrombiekent.com.au or contact your travel advisor to find out more.



*Terms & Conditions apply. Prices shown are per person based on twin share and are subject to availability.

In the news



Intrepid launches **FEMALE EXPEDITION TO SAUDI**

Off the back of new figures showing a rising trend in Australian and New Zealand travellers visiting Saudi Arabia, Intrepid has just launched a 12-day Saudi Arabia Women’s Expedition.

Led exclusively by female leaders and guides from Riyadh to Jeddah, the itinerary was created to support female-owned businesses in the region, from the women-owned accommodation that guests will enjoy to the local operator that Intrepid has partnered with to bring the experience to life.

“With tourism to Saudi focused on vast ultra-luxury offerings, we wanted to balance that by creating something completely unique in Saudi Arabia: a trip putting local women’s voices centre stage,” said Jenny Gray, Intrepid’s Product Manager for Women’s Expedition.

“With activities like joining a cooking class with a local female chef and getting pampered at a women-owned salon, the trip will give our travellers the chance to see a side of Saudi few get to experience.” ••

KYRGYZSTAN 4WD ADVENTURE

Compass Expeditions’ inaugural 4WD tour, ‘Kyrgyzstan Discovered’, is expected to sell-out ahead of its departure this month.

Pete Vorst and Jerry Cook, Compass Expeditions’ business leaders, will guide guests on an exhilarating 14-day journey, taking in the beauty of Lake Karakol and the historic Silk Road.

The group will connect with local cultures in Kazaman and Arslanbob, and admire the stunning scenery from

the destination’s endless mountain ranges.

“This trip is the culmination of years of meticulous planning, leveraging our extensive expertise from our motorcycle tours across this captivating region,” Cook shared.

“Pete and I joining this inaugural trip underscores our unwavering dedication to the success of the 4WD touring programme, and our personal commitment to ensuring an unparalleled experience for our guests.” ••



NZ SELF-FAMIL PROGRAM FOR AGENTS

Australian travel agents are invited to explore New Zealand, thanks to Tourism New Zealand's new self-famil discount programme. Advisors are welcome to choose their dates between March and November, determine the length of their stay and choose which experiences they would like to upskill their destination knowledge.

"There's so much that awaits in Aotearoa New Zealand - from the *manaakitanga* of the people, the epic landscapes and the incredible diversity of experiences," said Andrew Waddell, Tourism New Zealand's General Manager - Australia.

"We are excited to welcome and support Australian travel sellers in exploring the country for themselves, while gaining the personalised knowledge that will shape tailored experiences for their clients."

Once approved, agents will gain access to a variety of discounts provided by Qualmark tourism businesses.

For more information, [click here](#). **



Australia's original & most trusted Africa Safari specialist since 1969

Tailor-made Journeys, Small Group Tours, Flying Safaris, & Luxury Rail



Brochures available to order from Tifs

Discovery Resorts - Undara
QUEENSLAND



Discovery Resorts - Rottnest Island
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Discovery Resorts - Kings Canyon
NORTHERN TERRITORY



Discovery Resorts - Lake Argyle
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



2024 & 2025
Travel Dates
Available⁺

Explore
more, with
30% OFF STAYS*



Discovery
RESORTS

BOOK NOW with your preferred wholesaler.

*Offer subject to availability and valid for new FIT bookings placed between 01 July 2024 - 30 September 2024. For selected travel dates.

+Blackout dates and T&C's apply.

Operated by the





FIJI'S RAPID ADVENTURE RISE



Tourism Fiji CEO Brent Hill

The inaugural AdventureNext travel conference will take place 20-22 November in Fiji, hosted by the global Adventure Travel Trade Association. Taking place at the Intercontinental Fiji Golf Resort and Spa, the event will feature suppliers from organisations and destinations from different regions of Fiji, promoting the country's growing adventure sector.

Fiji has long been associated with resorts and relaxation, but now more tourists are visiting the country in search of adventure.

"AdventureNext is where Fiji can position its adventure tourism experiences to a large audience of between 250-300 international buyers and media, who will in turn then spread the word about Fiji's natural, cultural and adventure tourism activities to their audiences," said Tourism Fiji CEO Brent Hill.

"While accommodation investment is vital, so too is enriching tourism experiences, particularly in adventure tourism, aligning with Fiji's offerings and opening opportunities for local entrepreneurs." ••



A UNIQUE OUTBACK EXPERIENCE

APT's Mitchell Falls Wilderness Lodge in the Kimberley has recently undergone an extensive refurbishment and is now ready for guests to enjoy a unique outback experience. The renovation included significant infrastructure upgrades, brand new cabins and a timber swimming deck.

Meanwhile, the lodge now features 24 spacious ensuite tented cabins each with timber floor showers, comfortable beds and private decks with landscape views. Also, guests can cool off at an upgraded private waterhole.

And even in the outback, with the addition of Starlink wi-fi, visitors will be connected in the remote regions of the Kimberley. ••

First Halal cruise launches

Albatros Expeditions has announced its first-ever Halal-certified cruise to Antarctica, in what marks an exciting milestone for the cruise line, and the polar expedition industry as a whole.

While travellers with other religious beliefs are welcome to join the sailing which kicks off in 2026, the Muslim-friendly environment means no pork or alcohol will be served. Additionally, guests are not allowed to bring outside food or beverages on board. There will also be ladies-only hours in the onboard sauna every day.

"We are very proud to be the first movers in the polar industry to launch a new, exciting expedition adventure," said Jens Rasmussen, COO and Board Member of the Albatros Group.

The project is led by the polar industry's only female Muslim expedition leader and Albatros' Southeast Asia Business Development Manager, Rashidah Lim. **



Where to next?

Small group travel in more than 100 countries.

Certified

 Corporation

 Intrepid



Trips in over 100 countries



Expert local leaders



Small group sizes



Responsible travel

Turning the tide on overtourism

Intrepid Travel General Manager – Sales & Marketing ANZ, **Yvette Thompson**.



“WE CAN MAKE A START BY TRAVELLING SLOWER, SMALLER, SMARTER.”

After spending the peak European summer sailing through the Greek Islands and exploring Italy, I've seen firsthand how our travel choices can either contribute to or help combat overtourism.

With Barcelona cracking down on Airbnb and Venice capping tour groups at 25, it feels like overtourism has reached a tipping point this year and our beloved destinations are getting serious about managing the travel surge. The effects of overtourism are far reaching from straining local resources, eroding cultural authenticity, to ultimately, diminishing the quality of the travel experience.

While there's no one-size-fits-all solution, we can make a start by travelling slower, smaller, smarter and create positive change through our love for travel.

Travelling slower

Slow travel is gaining momentum. More of us are choosing longer stays in a single place, soaking up the local vibe and reducing our carbon footprint. But slow travel isn't just about taking it easy; it's about making meaningful connections with the places and people we visit. If you're planning a trip, consider a longer stay to truly get to know the destination.

Travelling smaller

During my summer sail through the Greek Islands on a small group tour, I saw how travelling in smaller groups can help tackle overtourism. A smaller group means a smaller environmental footprint.

More travellers are looking for ways to reduce their carbon footprint, whether through offset programmes or eco-friendly transport options like trains. Sailing in overcrowded regions during the height of summer not only lowered our environmental impact but also enriched my experience. I explored smaller islands that felt untouched by tourism, with more interactions with locals who shared hidden gems between the iconic spots.

Travelling smarter

This is about being more considered about how we travel, leaving the places we visit better than we found them. Staying in smaller towns in Italy helped me experience the country without the crowds and experience the local way of life more deeply. This approach not only enriches your journey, but also helps spread tourism dollars more evenly across the region, reducing the strain on overcrowded hotspots and minimising environmental disruptions.

[Intrepid Travel has launched a 12-page open-source handbook](#) to help travel advisors promote sustainable travel. By embracing these practices, the industry can lead the way in creating a more responsible and enriching travel experience. ••

NEWS



A MOROCCAN odyssey

From the Sahara Desert to the souks in Marrakech and the Ziz Valley, Wendy Wu Tours has recently launched its fully inclusive 19-day Moroccan Odyssey tour. Based on authenticity and cultural experiences, highlights include cooking classes in Fez, a pottery workshop and a Moroccan tea ceremony, while taking in the views of Ourika Valley. Departures kick off in October 2025. ••

EXPLORE OFFERS SAF OPTION

Explore Worldwide was one of the first adventure operators to offer customers the option to purchase sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) alongside their holiday bookings, and is now calling on other travel brands to follow suit.

The worldwide tour operator, which now has an office in Australia, is urging the industry to prioritise reducing emissions amid rising demand for sustainable travel.

Half of Explore's customers want to reduce their environmental impact, according to a survey recently conducted by the company, with 51% also believing the industry and consumers should share this financial responsibility. Additionally, 45% believe that the sector needs to develop low-emission aviation fuels. ••

CANADA WINTER MAGIC IN THE GREAT WHITE NORTH



📍 Lake Louise, Alberta

Winter in Canada is like stepping into a magical snowdome, filled with glittering forests, world-class ski resorts and snow-drenched adventures that will make you wish it was winter all year round.



📍 Golden, British Columbia

World-class skiing and snowboarding

British Columbia is home to 13 major ski resorts, including the iconic Whistler Blackcomb, considered North America's premier mountain resort. From Vancouver to the Rocky Mountains, you'll find ski resorts with wideopen runs and welcoming residents. A number of resorts in British Columbia boast 'ski-in ski-out' villages, including Sun Peaks, Silver Star Mountain Resort, and Big White Ski Resort. The fun continues well after the lifts shut down with an apres-ski culture that will have you dancing in ski-boots with friends and friends-to-be.

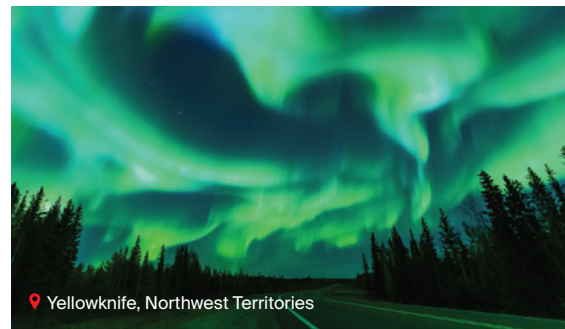
In Banff National Park, Alberta, SkiBig3's three-for-one option is hard to beat, with a single lift ticket providing direct lift access at all three resorts: Banff Sunshine Village, Lake Louise Ski Resort and Mt. Norquay. Further north in Jasper National Park, try Marmot Basin Ski Resort, renowned for its wide open terrain and limited lift lines.

Greatest light show on Earth

For the ultimate transformational experience, grab a front row seat to the northern lights in Canada. The current solar cycle (a periodic 11-year change in the sun's activity) is set to reach its peak in 2024. This increase in solar activity results in more northern lights activity, making it an outstanding time for aurora viewing.

The Yukon, Northwest Territories, and the sub-arctic region of Churchill in Manitoba, are three of the best destinations in Canada to view the northern lights, due to their ideal location directly under the aurora oval.

There are two aurora viewing seasons summer | autumn from mid Aug to mid Sept or winter from late Dec through to early April. Combine northern lights viewing with a guided snowshoe adventure along forest trails blanketed in glistening snow, or listen to Indigenous stories around a glowing campfire as the green and crimson ribbons of light dance overhead and add on dogsledding and icefishing.



📍 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories



📍 Johnston Canyon, Alberta

Photo: Discover Banff Tours

Off-slope adventures

From ice-skating to snowmobiling to dogsledding, Canada is truly the ultimate home of winter, with an abundance of off-slope adventures for all ages. Canada's mountainous landscapes and professional tour guides offer idyllic dogsledding trails throughout the country. Many of British Columbia's winter ski resorts offer unforgettable dogsledding experiences, while independent operators exist in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Quebec.

Alternatively, immerse yourself in picture-perfect winter landscapes by jumping on a snowmobile, fat bike or strapping on snowshoes. The network of trails criss-crossing the country's legendary national and provincial parks are ideal for guided and independent explorations of Canada's vast winter terrain.



📍 Spray Lakes, Alberta

→ Visit www.keepexploring.com.au

Changing the game

Adventure travel goes far beyond extreme activities like skydiving and canyoning these days. Now the sector is diversifying and bringing more meaning to visitors of all backgrounds.

BY ADAM BISHOP

Only a generation ago, if you had asked people to define what an adventure travel trip entails, most would have rattled off a list of high-adrenaline, somewhat extreme activities like bungee jumping, mountaineering or white-water rafting.


However, the term has evolved rapidly in recent years. Adventure travel is no longer the exclusive domain of young backpackers trekking through Asia on a shoestring budget.

Like much of the travel sector, the segment has matured greatly over the last 20-plus years, taking on a plethora of deeper interpretations as travellers of all ages look to push the boundaries of their own understanding. While there are still many tourists questing after trips that involve high-speed

ziplining through the canopies of tropical jungles, the prevailing winds of adventuring have moved to more nuanced areas that prioritise meaning over the sheer adrenaline rush.

That quest for meaning and connection is a trope that runs deep in almost all areas of the travel ecosystem. In the world of luxury for example, it's no longer good enough for an operator to offer high-end accommodation with nice sheets and rugs, travellers want to make connections and lasting memories in premium style.

The same can be said for adventure travel. The ever-more sophisticated palate of travellers is seeking out bespoke adventure trips designed to capture eye-opening experiences that will last a lifetime. »



There are more than 700 unique Indigenous communities in Canada.

Culture club

For Intrepid’s local chief, Brett Mitchell, presenting customers with the opportunity to embark on a richly rewarding cultural journey is key to the operator’s ethos of what adventure travel in the future should look like.

“Aussies today are seeking more immersive and authentic experiences, choosing to explore local cultures and off-the-beaten-track adventures and destinations,” Mitchell explains.

“Unlike a generation ago, there’s a strong and growing interest in partaking in travel adventures in a sustainable fashion, with Aussies eager to positively impact the places they visit.

“This can range from hiking through remote landscapes to engaging in community-based tourism, to travelling via rail - Australians just want their travel journeys to be meaningful and enriching.”

Intrepid is one of the leading operators when it comes to designing itineraries with adventure at their core, melded with a clear mission of ‘passion and purpose’.

And it would appear the brief never rests on its laurels. While many operators talk tough about sustainability, few, if any, are closer to the vanguard of eco responsibility than Intrepid.

Not content with maintaining an equilibrium between expanding its travel product and protecting the natural environment its groups visit, Intrepid is helping to pioneer ‘regenerative tourism’ on the back of a growing demand.

This is an area that Intrepid believes will become mainstream in the adventure travel segment moving forward.

“Sustainable tourism aims to maintain a balance

over the long-term, making sure that the impacts of tourism don’t compromise the wellbeing of future generations, whereas regenerative tourism goes beyond maintaining that balance, desiring to leave destinations better off than before,” Mitchell explains.

“For instance, recent examples of over-tourism, such as in Venice and the Canary Islands, show the challenges of unsustainable travel practices, prompting a shift towards initiatives promoting responsible tourism that respects local cultures, minimises environmental impact, and enhances community benefits.”

Another future trend among Aussies are destinations that can cater to wellness and mindfulness, according to Mitchell.

These all fit into the operator’s broad bucket approach of adventure travel that segues toward deeper meaning and personalised journeys that last a lifetime.

“We are seeing that those destinations that are focused on wellness and eco-conscious adventures are gaining popularity, showing the shift towards mindful travel,” Mitchell believes.

And it makes sense when you take the time to think about it. Although a seemingly long way from the traditional conception of adventure travel which evokes images of base jumping and rock climbing, tours that focus on achieving mindfulness stand a strong chance of being remembered by travellers.

Practitioners of mindfulness will tell you the pursuit is wholly concerned with being present without distraction. The central goal is to create a higher awareness, reduce stress, improve mental focus and foster an attitude of acceptance and curiosity.»

“AUSTRALIANS JUST WANT THEIR TRAVEL JOURNEYS TO BE MEANINGFUL AND ENRICHING.”



The Annapurna ranges in Nepal.

A two-way exchange

G Adventures is another brand that views adventure travel through the prism of change. Managing Director Oceania, Sean Martin, believes the shifting hankering of travellers in the space has brought on a need for a deeper, “two-way exchange” between the tourist and the destination.

“The biggest change we’ve seen, which is rewarding to see, is a shift towards people looking for more local experiences and cultural immersion, and travellers being more conscious about how they spend their travel dollars,” Martin said.

“Adventure travel was initially perceived as something that the younger generation did...but [the segment] today comes in a variety of travel styles and we cater to the growing number of people seeking out adventure in their travels who come from very different demographics.”

Adventuring also needs to be flexible and local, Martin adds, stating that G Adventures has made strong efforts to ensure its itineraries keep up with the pace of change.

“Over the years, we’ve listened to what our travellers want and have strived to give them flexible itineraries, freedom to

explore, smaller groups, safety and peace of mind, and locally based guides.”

Diversity is another important pillar of ensuring adventure travel is catered for, according to Martin, especially when the term itself is undergoing a metamorphosis.

“The word ‘adventure’ is highly subjective - an adventure for one person could be as simple as getting on a plane or travelling solo for the first time.

“This is why we have many ‘travel styles’ within the G Adventures portfolio of more than 700 trips around the world.

“We have our Active trips, our recently launched Geluxe premium active collection, dedicated wellness trips, National Geographic Journeys, which is focused on wildlife and education, plus our dedicated youth product with our 18-to-thirtysomethings and Roamies (in partnership with Hostelworld) experiences,” Martin added.

An evolution, not a revolution

However, it’s not only operators that are noticing the evolution of the adventure travel space. Even historically successful destinations like the great outdoor heaven of Canada have clocked the changing trends. »

FEATURE



Human connection is a key part of the adventure experience.



CANADA

WILD BEAR ENCOUNTERS



The autumn months of October and November serve up prime polar bear viewing experiences in the sub-Arctic region of Churchill in Canada’s central province of Manitoba. Known as the “Polar Bear Capital of the World”, Churchill is home to 15,000 of these majestic creatures, with opportunities to encounter them via a ‘tundra’ vehicle, on guided walks or from within a fenced wilderness lodge.

A WILDERNESS ADVENTURE YOU’LL NEVER FORGET.

For bears of a different kind, visit British Columbia. There, grizzly and black bear encounters await (at a safe distance). Join a tour on land or by boat and head into the Great Bear Rainforest. The province boasts several floating lodges and luxury resorts that offer grizzly bear viewing tours from spring through the autumn.



Churchill, Manitoba

© Dennis Fast



Consumers are looking to create memories that will last a lifetime.

FEATURE

“THESE TRAVELLERS APPRECIATE SUPPORTING AND CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL CULTURE, AND THEY CELEBRATE DIVERSITY.”

While this gem of a market has enjoyed strong interest from Aussies for decades seeking the wild allure of heli-skiing and river rapids, more recently, a new cohort of visitors are flocking to Canada for a major change of pace.

Destination Canada’s MD for Australia, Julie King, believes the swing in desire has been palpable for the North American tourist mecca, with many travellers unclipping their snowboards and flying suits in exchange for activities such as wildlife watching and hiking.

“A generation ago, Australian travellers might have primarily sought out Canada’s ski resorts and iconic national parks, but today, they are increasingly looking for more immersive experiences that go beyond traditional adventure activities, such as indigenous cultural tours, multi-day hiking expeditions, and eco-friendly wildlife encounters,” King explains.

As many readers will already note, for countries like New Zealand and Indonesia for example, visitation is far more than just dollars and cents for the tourism economy - especially in an era where the awareness of the impact that travellers can wreak on the environment is higher than ever.

For this reason, many countries are investing just as much effort into attracting the right kind of travellers than they are trying to secure greater numbers.

Canada is one of those markets that recognises the full value of pulling in adventure travellers who understand that local connection and sustainability are paramount.

“Adventurers and cultural enthusiasts are our most valued guests,” King says.

“These travellers appreciate supporting and contributing to local culture, and they celebrate diversity and positively influence the economic ambitions of our communities.

“Our marketing efforts concentrate on travellers who stay longer, spend more, seek local culture, and truly engage with Canada, leaving our destinations better than they found them and becoming advocates for Canada through word-of-mouth.”

To make the adventure space easier to understand for agents



and travellers, Destination Canada encourages the market to understand its offerings through three key categories:

Extreme adventure: Activities involving high-risk and physical challenges like rock climbing and heli-skiing;

Active adventure: Moderate physical activity with less risk such as hiking and kayaking;

Nature-based adventure: Experiences focusing on wildlife with minimal physical exertion like bird watching.

The smart hedge for Canada is to keep fulfilling those core visitor markets that have made it a tourism powerhouse, but also ensure the country is catering to the increasing shifts in adventure travel appetites toward slower-paced trips.

“Of course, there will be a segment that wants more hardcore adventure and Canada absolutely caters for this,” King says.

“Destination Canada works with many different tour operators and companies to ensure that Australians looking to participate in extreme sports, mountaineering, and remote wilderness expeditions can do so in a safe, respectful way for both the environment and local communities.”

The agents’ point of view

While tour operators and DMOs clearly have a view on how the space is changing, are sellers on the ground noticing the same shift?

For Home Travel Company owner, Robyn Sinfield, although the adventure travel space is not one of her larger segments, changes have been noted among her Tasmanian clients.

“Clients have so much more choice for adventure than [before], be it hiking, biking, safaris, or walking tours,” Sinfield reveals. »

“THESE TRAVELLERS APPRECIATE SUPPORTING AND CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL CULTURE, AND THEY CELEBRATE DIVERSITY.”

FEATURE

“Adventure for my clients is about unforgettable experiences and being very responsible doing it and travelling with meaning.

“Ideally, travellers want to adventure in a small group while living like, and learning from, the local people.”

The fact that we are living longer and enjoying better health well into our 70s and 80s is another change Sinfield has observed over the years.

“More senior travellers are finding they are able to take on more challenging adventures, it’s nothing to have a mid-70s client on a long Spanish cycling tour,” she adds.

For Travel Associates advisor, Christine Bottrell, the shift in what her adventure travellers want has changed markedly in recent years.

“People are seeking authenticity and space,” she says. “They desire cultural experiences done right, and with greater education around sustainability in tourism, we encourage these conversations around what this looks like.

“Travellers can see the impact with the ongoing exposure to recent social media posts around how overcrowded destinations have become with the travel resurgence,” she notes.

Bottrell also concurs with Sinfield that the adventure market is seeing a greater influx of older Aussies deciding

that life is too short not to embrace the great outdoors.

“We have seen many older clients return that had lost their confidence or felt their days of travel were up,” she observes.

“With the conversations in the media around Baby Boomers being the wealthiest generation, providing the largest intergenerational wealth transfer in Australia’s history, they are heading through the agency doors to secure experiences like Africa, Iceland or the Arctic.”

Meanwhile, Bottrell indicates younger generations are seeking out advisors to guide them off-the-beaten-path to destinations such as Colombia, South Korea, or hiking in Hawaii.

While the historical view of adventure travel being a high-octane experience remains intact, it’s also clear the market has splintered significantly and is continuing to evolve to meet the needs of a global populace who crave relaxed connection over straight endorphins.

In a world saturated with ringtones, status updates, news alerts, global tensions, social media fracas and pandemics, who can blame travellers for wanting to chill out, immerse themselves in a remote destination and make more genuine human connections? I’m off to buy my ticket right now. ••

“Sustainable tourism aims to maintain a balance over the long-term,” says Intrepid’s Brett Mitchell.



EXPLORE NEW ZEALAND ON YOUR DREAM SELF-FAMIL

The Explore New Zealand Discount Programme gives approved travel sellers access to over 250 discounts across airfares, accommodation and experiences. Apply today and start curating your dream self-famil.

[APPLY NOW](#)

**100% PURE
NEW ZEALAND**
traveltrade.newzealand.com



Southern Lakes Helicopters
Fiordland

A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Adventure travel is appearing in some of the most unexpected places all over the world, while other destinations are reinventing themselves to cater for new tourists. Here are the emerging hotspots on travellers' bucket lists.

BY MYLES STEDMAN



Travellers returned to ticking off their bucket list once borders opened following the COVID-19 pandemic. The appetite for adventure travel was, and still is, very strong – so much so that it surprised even experienced adventurers such as Crooked Compass founder Lisa Pagotto.

“What we found initially when borders first opened was that the quite extreme destinations came back first,” she recalls.

Pagotto attributes this to an impatience to get bucket lists back on track after endless months of lockdown.

“I honestly believed that we would be selling South Korea, Japan – the safe, close-to-home destinations for quite a few months, but we didn’t,” she explains. “Our first international departure post-borders was the island of Socotra, which is off the coast of Yemen. Our second one was Saudi, and our third one was Colombia. That was very unexpected.”

Crooked Compass’ customers, as with most adventure travellers, are not first-time travellers.

“They’re very well-heeled in terms of understanding geopolitical situations, [or] the way a country functions post a civil war,” Pagotto explains. “They’re very curious-minded, they’re not swayed by what they see in the media, and so they’re constantly looking for that stimulation [of] what’s new, what’s next.”

That’s what led an aircraft-full of Pagotto’s clients back to a small Yemeni outpost in the Indian Ocean as soon as travel privileges returned. Passengers on Crooked Compass’ ‘Socotra – The Lost Island’ private tour enjoy a sunset beach dinner, visit the protected marine area of Detwah Lagoon, and stroll Diksam Plateau, home to the island’s namesake Socotra dragon tree – all in a destination which is technically listed as “do not travel” by Smartraveller.

These are just some of the new frontiers that adventure travellers are exploring, as they search for emerging destinations not afflicted by overtourism. Around the turn of the millennium, war-torn countries in Eastern Europe, such as Croatia and Slovenia, were at the forefront of this niche sector. Australians are now experienced in travelling beyond the Iron Curtain, which has seen the Balkans increase in popularity.

“Kosovo, North Macedonia, Albania – that region is really starting to be the final frontier of Europe,” Pagotto says. “That’s where we’re really seeing the growth and the opportunity in the market.”

Also increasing in popularity is the Silk Road and the five ‘Stans - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

“The development that has taken place in that area is incredible, it’s a true adventurer’s bucket list experience,” Pagotto enthuses. »

Adventurous travellers are drawn to the remote landscapes of Iceland.

The five ‘Stans are increasing in popularity among tourists, including Uzbekistan’s Silk Road tours.



“With Turkmenistan now being the only one of the five ‘Stans that you need a visa for, it’s never been so easy for Aussies to be able to do all five at once.”

Believe it or not, Crooked Compass takes travellers to even more left-field destinations. The company has recently been refreshing its product in northern South America to places such as Suriname and French Guiana.

“People who have done Peru, Bolivia and Chile are looking for what’s next, what’s new, [they] need something that’s culturally different,” Pagotto says. “It is beautiful, it’s nature, it’s a completely different culture to the rest of South America... These destinations have always been there, they’ve really been at the grassroots.”

Adventure is all around us

Adventure tourism isn’t just taking place in emerging destinations where few have travelled. Now, even developed regions like Japan and Northern Europe are offering new experiences for adventurous travellers.

Kerry Dickson from Sydney-based travel agency TravelUn is a specialist in Japan – one of the most popular destinations for Australians.

Japan may be most well-known for its culture and history, but Dickson believes it holds appeal as a future adventure destination.

“There’s potential for adventure tourism,” he explains.

Given Aussies’ love of Japan, we could be one of the first markets

to visit some of Japan’s lesser-known adventure destinations.

“We’re passing the net to the right kind of clientele who have been to Japan once or twice before, [but] want to go back a second or third time, and have suffered from overtourism [in places like] Kyoto,” Dickson notes.

One of these key itineraries on sale with TravelUn is the 12-day ‘Setouchi Reflection Tour’, which is fully escorted and showcases the traditional arts, cultural heritage, and serene landscapes of one of Japan’s lesser-known regions. The small-group boutique tour travels with a maximum of eight guests, taking passengers to Naoshima Island, Onomichi, and the Shimanami Cycling Route.

New Zealand, which is often associated with high-octane tourism, is also trying to broaden its adventure offerings beyond the typical Australian playground of Queenstown.

Novel offerings in the island country include EcoZip Adventures in Kaikoura – on the other side of the South Island from Queenstown – which offers five giant ziplines, covering more than two kilometres in length. The three-and-a-half-hour adventure traverses the streams of the Kahutara River, and onto Rakanui Station, a working farm, where travellers hike to what has been described as “the most spectacular ziplines in the Southern Hemisphere”.

Even visitors to Christchurch, New Zealand’s second-largest city, can change their perspective of the destination at Christchurch Adventure Park’s new Bako Run. This cycleway is situated on the open side of a hill, weaving between lush pine forests, sections of burnt trees, and untouched greenery. »

New Zealand is in the process of reinventing itself.



Meanwhile, Rotorua, typically known for its spas, is now making a name for itself for its 'Vertigo at Velocity Valley' attraction – more commonly known as “bungee jumping without a cord”. Travellers can experience a near-50-metre drop with nothing attached – no cord or safety line – with nothing but a net to meet you at the bottom.

While many associate Europe with its slow travel opportunities, few rarely think to experience it through an adventurous lens. But Northern Europe's raw, untouched landscapes, diverse wildlife and rich history make it the ideal destination for tourists keen to explore its volcanic terrains and glacial fjords.

Tour operator APT and luxury cruise line Seabourn have just launched a new partnership, opening travellers up to the untouched territories and pristine landscapes of Iceland and Scotland on board Zodiac cruises.

Think sailing around the picturesque Papey Island in Iceland or the uninhabited island of Mousa in the Shetland Islands in Scotland. Or discovering the majestic Dynjandi Waterfall and scenic village of Patreksfjörður, a gateway to Iceland's remote Westfjords.

“These destinations are gaining popularity among adventure travellers because they offer unique and exciting experiences that are increasingly rare in more commercialised locations,” says Sarah Latimore, APT Travel Group's Head of European Product.

“Each destination provides a chance to connect with nature in its rawest form and to experience cultures and landscapes that remain largely untouched by mass tourism.”



FEATURE

Africa's reinvention

Leaving the well-beaten path for the adventure sector is an ideal way to avoid the crowds in popular destinations.

Bench Africa Trade Relations Manager Andy Kirkman – who is an expert in left-of-field African destinations - knows the value of escaping the masses.

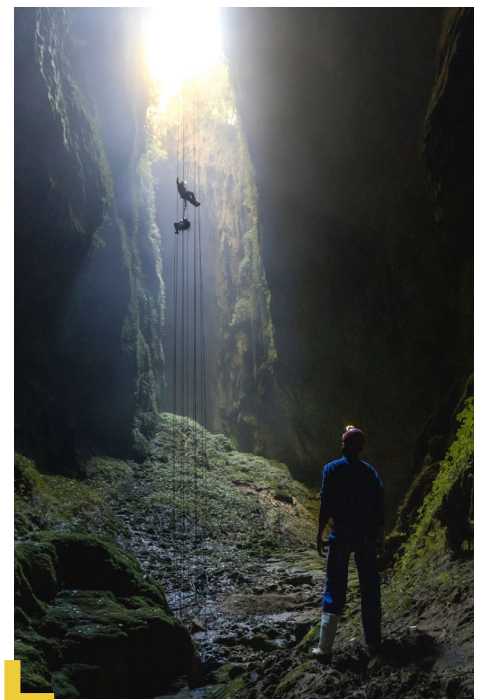
“I remember my first experience with the Maasai Mara when we found a leopard in a tree, just sitting there, basking in the sun...and we had to get into a queue [to see it],” he explains.

Tour operator Bench is now developing a range of products which will shift travellers from crowds of humans back to crowds of animals. These offbeat destinations avoid the most popular spots with tourists, like the Maasai Mara.

“What we're doing is heading further north,” Kirkman explains. “Everyone starts from Nairobi, but then heads out to places like Lake Navisha, Lake Nakuru, then up north toward lesser-travelled places like Samburu. You still get all the wildlife experiences and beautiful Kenyan landscape, but much fewer crowds.”

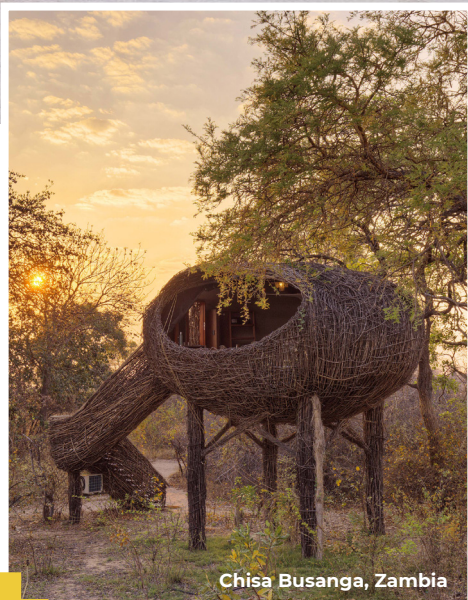
Africa, the second-largest continent on earth, is more than just the big five though, and increasingly, adventure travellers are in search of what else the destination has to offer.

Kirkman highlights Mount Kilimanjaro, for more active adventurers, who may be surprised by the Africa they find on the continent's highest mountain. »

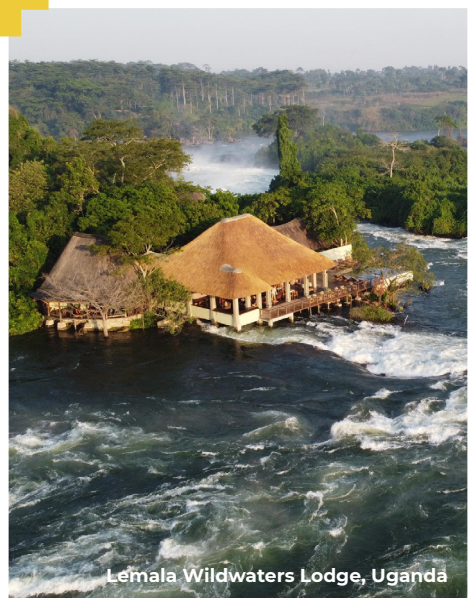


“THEY OFFER UNIQUE AND EXCITING EXPERIENCES THAT ARE INCREASINGLY RARE.”

“YOU CAN NOW DO IT IN FIVE-STAR LUXURY, YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE ON AN OVERLAND TRUCK.”



Chisa Busanga, Zambia



Lemala Wildwaters Lodge, Uganda

“You go through various different terrains, from tropical terrain, through to barren mountains, and then as you get towards the top, you go through snow-covered terrain.”

Namibia is also rating highly for the adventurer who may be on their second or third trip to Africa, and is in search of a more nuanced depiction of the destination.

“You’ve got the Skeleton Coast, you’ve got Fish River Canyon, these huge, beautiful geological features which are the attraction of heading to Namibia,” Kirkman says.

Although wildlife may not be the star of the show in this Southern African country, that does not mean there aren’t any faunal treasures to find.

“You’ve got more unique wildlife, like the desert elephant and the desert adapted rhino,” Kirkman describes.

The rise of high-end adventure

Contributing to a rise in popularity in the adventure sector is the growth of travel styles in the sector. There are many travellers who prefer not to rough it in tents while they overland in Cold War-era autos.

“You can now do it in five-star luxury, you don’t have to be on an overland truck,” Lisa Pagotto explains.

“Before, a lot of these big multi-country journeys were pitching a tent and participation touring, where you pay your local fee and everyone chips in for

cooking. Someone else does the washing up, and someone’s on tent-cleaning duties. Now you can do it in everything from three-, four-, five-star luxury.”

Bench is pioneering similar product in Africa. At Wildwaters Lodge in Uganda, travellers are encouraged to step outside of their comfort zone, before spending the night relaxing on a private island in the middle of the Nile.

“You’ve got this infinity pool that literally overlooks the rapids right in front of you.

You can go whitewater rafting, you can go canoeing, there’s fishing, it’s a great spot for birdwatchers. [Those activities] sit outside the normal scope of what people consider going to Africa for.”

Adventure has diversified; not only beyond its traditional remit of destinations, but also its broader spectrum of travel styles, marking quite the evolution of the sector since the pandemic.

Whether your idea of the perfect holiday is canyon swinging in New Zealand or going for a meandering bushwalk, adventure travel really is for everyone now.

Even in places like Mongolia, there are now five-star ger camps, which make for a far more restful sleep after a day of horseback riding, as Pagotto explains.

“You can now do it with private facilities and hot water and electricity - and unfortunately, wi-fi.” ••

CRUISE & TOUR HOLIDAYS

EMBRACE THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS



**SAVE
\$1,200**
PER COUPLE
ON ALL
DEPARTURES

It's the ultimate combination – an award-winning Wendy Wu tour AND the very best of the world's ocean cruises. Really get under the skin of the destination you're visiting with a fully-inclusive immersive tour either before or after your stylish journey aboard a modern cruise ship. Enjoy exceptional culinary delights, entertainment, and relaxing amenities throughout.

OSAKA TO SEOUL

23 DAYS CRUISE & TOUR HOLIDAY **NOW FROM \$13,080^{PP} TWIN SHARE**



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 night cruise on Celebrity Millennium
- Admire beautiful Mount Fuji
- See the Japanese snow monkeys
- Embrace the lively nature of Seoul

JOURNEY THROUGH SOUTHERN AFRICA

23 DAYS CRUISE & TOUR HOLIDAY **NOW FROM \$19,380^{PP} TWIN SHARE**



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 night cruise on Azamara Quest
- Discover wildlife at Chobe National Park
- Admire Victoria Falls
- Relax on the beautiful beaches of Port Elizabeth

BEIJING TO SINGAPORE

25 DAYS CRUISE & TOUR HOLIDAY **NOW FROM \$12,980^{PP} TWIN SHARE**



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 night cruise on Celebrity Solstice
- Uncover the ancient treasures of Beijing
- Come face to face with the loveable Giant Pandas
- Marvel at the modern metropolis of Singapore

PACKAGES INCLUDE

ON BOARD CRUISE

- ✓ Cruise with outside stateroom
- ✓ Dining and drinks
- ✓ Onboard entertainment

ON WENDY WU LAND TOUR

- ✓ Airfares on quality full service airlines
- ✓ All domestic transportation and transfers
- ✓ All accommodation and meals
- ✓ Small group size with English speaking guide

Call us on **1300 727 998**, visit wendywutours.com.au or see your local travel agent



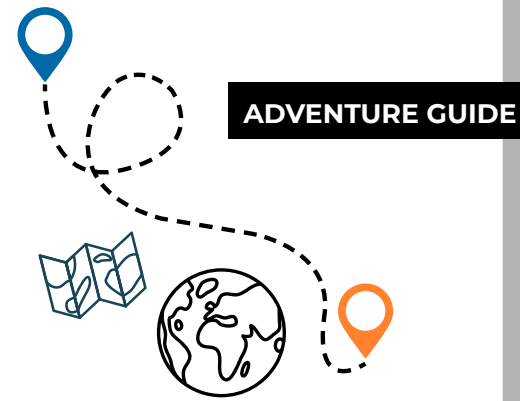
Travel Daily

ADVENTURE
travel guide

for
MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILIES
THRILLSEEKERS
LUXURY TRAVELLERS
SENIOR TOURISTS
SOLO VISITORS

MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILIES

There are plenty of active experiences for everyone, from the youngest traveller to the most experienced adventure legend.



GET LOST IN CANADA

There are endless adventures to be had in Canada's Whiteshell Provincial Park, home to lakes, rivers and forests that are explorable by a huge network of trails, many of which are suitable for all the family. For those seeking more adventure, there are also opportunities for canoeing, mountain biking, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. And there's plenty of accommodation options, whether you'd prefer to snuggle up in a cosy cottage, camp under the stars, or luxuriate in a resort.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



A CLASSIC AFRICAN SAFARI

Between the Drakensberg Mountains and the Kruger National Park on the banks of the Makutsi River in South Africa, lies the family-owned and managed Makutsi Safari Springs. Families can soak in the peace and serenity of the park's African bush, teeming with elephants, rhinos, giraffe, crocodiles, lions, cheetahs, and leopards, on the Bench Africa Makutsi Classic Safari. The seven-day itinerary includes plenty of exciting game viewing, sightseeing, and leisure time.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



TAKE A BREAK IN BORNEO

Travel to Borneo with Intrepid on a nine-day family adventure and discover the curious wildlife and spectacular landscapes of the region. Learn how orphaned orangutans are rehabilitated back into the wild, swim among colourful fish, relax on sandy beaches and watch baby green turtles take wobbly steps towards the waterfront. All the essentials are included, and you'll get plenty of free time to explore at your own pace. Prices start from \$2,023.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



MAGIC IN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Pack your swimmers and get ready for the whole family to discover the spectacular Great Barrier Reef at Reef Magic's pontoon. Each adventure lasts for five hours, includes all snorkel gear, a fresh buffet lunch, onboard marine biologists, a sundeck and loungers and even a state-of-the-art scientific marine lab. Special offers are currently available for families.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



GET DIRTY IN FIJI

Discover Fiji on an off-road quad bike adventure for the whole family, with Go Dirty Tours in Nadi. Ride through remote pine forests, natural landmarks, mud baths and hot springs. Splash through mud puddles, zip by cane fields and drive by the biggest Hindu Temple in the South Pacific. It is recommended that kids five or older and over 140cm in height take part in the adventures.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



FLY THROUGH THE TREES

Treetop Adventures is Australia's much loved tree ropes and ziplining experience, located in 16 parks around the country, from Cape Tribulation to Belgrave and Taronga Zoo. Each park features challenging obstacle courses up in the tree canopy, as well as rope courses, zipcoasters and networks. The fun is open to everyone from three-year-old adventurers to the oldest adrenaline junkie.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



7

A BEACH HOLIDAY IN ALBANIA

With its rolling hills, quirky towns, rugged mountains, winding coastlines, and turquoise seas, Albania is the perfect destination for active families looking for a Mediterranean holiday. This adventure from Explore features rafting along one of Europe's last wild rivers, hiking canyon trails, a thrilling rib boat ride to the Karaburun maritime park, as well as exploring charming cities like Gjirokaster and Vlorë. It's an ideal trip for kids seven and above.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



8

AN OUTBACK ADVENTURE

Venture aboard the *Kimberley Durack* for a journey through Lake Argyle and the Ord River Scheme, where guests can swim in crystal-clear waters shared with Johnston River Freshwater Crocodiles. Families will love the three-hour lunch cruise, which offers an immersive exploration of the lake's unique flora and fauna. Combine this adventure with an overnight stay at Discovery Resorts – Lake Argyle, which features an infinity pool, scenic views, and activities like bushwalking and mountain biking.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



9

MAKE TRACKS IN MONT BLANC

Trek through stunning alpine scenery around the highest peak in Western Europe on UTracks' Mont Blanc Family Adventure. Spanning seven days, this specialised walk ensures that the whole family experiences the spectacular trails of the French, Italian and Swiss Alps. Along the way, you'll stop into charming villages, stay in mountain huts and feast on local cuisine. Donkeys will lighten the load by transporting bags and supplies.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



10

NORTHERN INDIA WITH TEENS

Take the whole family on an unforgettable adventure to India on this seven-day itinerary from Intrepid, from the Pink City of Jaipur to the lush Ranthambore National Park. Then there's the Taj Mahal, one of the finest examples of Islamic architecture in the world. You'll even stay in a 17th-century palace in Alsisar, complete with grand courtyards and colourful arcades. It's an ideal trip especially for families with teens.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

Explore!

An almighty adventure awaits

We offer over 350 small group adventures to more than 100 destinations worldwide. Our expert guides, average group sizes of just 11, and seamless travel logistics are why 98% of our travellers would journey with us again.

Our trip styles:

Classic Discovery

Designed to fully immerse travellers in the culture of a destination; combining iconic sights and experiences with local insights and hidden gems.

Walking & Trekking

From leisurely walks to challenging treks, these tours are designed to experience a destination's landscapes and cultures in depth.

Cycling Adventures

Graded by difficulty, these self-powered journeys enliven the senses and immerse travellers into a region's landscapes and communities. E-bikes available.

We also offer Food and Drink, Wildlife and Family Adventures!

Small group adventures
Don't just travel, Explore!



NEW

Explore Upgraded

Our brand-new Upgraded product range includes all our Explore key ingredients - small groups led by expert guides and unforgettable experiences that have sustainability at heart - with that little extra comfort at the end of a long day of adventuring.



Find out
more



Certified

Corporation

THRILLSEEKERS

On the hunt for the next adrenalin-pumping adventure? Look no further.



CLIFFSIDE CAMPING IN VIC

There's camping, and then there's camping off the edge of a cliff. The first of its kind in Australia and the highest of any such commercial experience in the world, Beyond the Edge invites travellers with nerves of steel to spend a night on a portaledge suspended over a 300-metre cliff face in Victoria's Mount Buffalo gorge. Guests will abseil down to their 'campsite' before enjoying a sunset dinner while taking in the jaw-dropping views. The experience costs \$999 per person.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



WILD RIDIN' IN PATAGONIA

Imagine revving your motorcycle through the awe-inspiring scenery of Chile and Argentina. Well, that's exactly what you can expect when you join Compass Expeditions' 'Wild Patagonia' tour, which takes guests through snow-capped peaks, volcanoes, hanging glaciers, pristine forests, and mighty fjords. The 16-day adventure takes in the best of the Carretera Austral, deep within Patagonia, as well as the Chilean Lakes District, Ruta 40 and Argentina's pampas. Prices start from \$14,830.

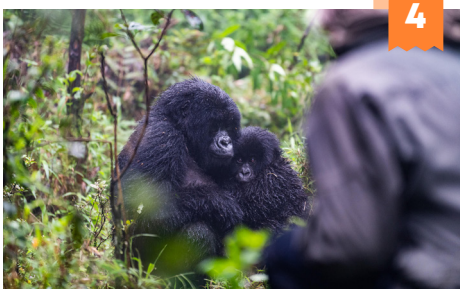
For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



SWIM WITH SHARKS IN TAHITI

Forget swimming among the dolphins, true thrill-seekers want to dive with the sharks. With Topdive, travellers can get uncomfortably close to the many different species of sharks found in Polynesian waters, from the white tip lagoon shark to the grey reef shark. Divers are also likely to encounter reef fish, turtles, and rays among the colourful coral. Offered in Tahiti, the once-in-a-lifetime experience is led by dive masters who ensure participants are safe and having fun.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



GORILLA SPOTTING IN RWANDA

Deep in the mist-shrouded forests of Rwanda, embark on the unique opportunity to encounter the enchanting mountain gorilla – one of the most awe-inspiring creatures on the planet. Venture through dense vegetation into the wilds of Africa. This is more than just a trek; it's an unforgettable journey into the heart of nature with Bench Africa.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



TREKKING MONT BLANC

Geared towards super-active travellers who crave a challenge, G Adventures' 10-day 'Trekking Mont Blanc' traverses the Alps from France to Italy and Switzerland along the Tour du Mont Blanc. The intense hiking circuit features picturesque views of glaciers, steep valleys and, of course, the awe-inspiring Mont Blanc. The tour is priced from \$2,159 per person.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



FOLLOW THE INCA TRAIL

Travel from the heady heights of the Andes to the exotic lowlands of the Amazon on Intrepid's journey through the best of Peru. Get acquainted with the charm and grace of historic towns before hiking along ancient pathways to Machu Picchu and discovering the heart and soul of the Inca Empire. Then eyeball exotic plants and wildlife in the world's most remarkable jungle.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



7

ULTIMATE ZIPLINING IN NZ

See Kaikoura, one of the most gorgeous destinations on New Zealand’s South Island, from a totally unique vantage point with EcoZip Adventures. The 3.5-hour experience starts with a 4X4 drive through the intertwined streams of the Kahutara river and onto picturesque working farm, Rakanui Station. After a short nature walk, you’ll soak in breathtaking sea and mountain views while zipping over 2.2km on five giant ziplines that have been described as ‘the most spectacular ziplines in the Southern Hemisphere’.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



8

INTO THE HEART OF THE ARABIAN DESERT

Explore the rugged coastlines and vast deserts of Oman, one of Arabia’s true gems, with Wild Frontiers on its 12-day ‘Oman Desert Adventure’ group tour. Guests set off from the capital to venture deep into mountains and deserts of the Bedu and the old Omani Imamate, taking in the incredible landscapes of the Hajar Mountains and the shifting sands of Wahiba. Next, they explore the old forts of Jabrin and Nizwa and journey into the vast emptiness of the Rub Al Khali, the Empty Quarter.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



9

TRAVERSE THE MOUNTAINS OF NEPAL

Combine two of the world’s greatest classic treks with Another World Adventures’ Everest Base Camp & Annapurna Circuit Trek. Not for the faint of heart, this trip challenges visitors to reach new heights as they take in nature at its grandest – from seeing the wind-swept peak of Everest, to traversing high passes and crossing blue-white glaciers. Guests will also immerse themselves in the rich cultures and traditions of Nepal, visiting tiny villages and meeting friendly locals along the way.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



10

TAKE FLIGHT OVER TURKEY

Appreciate the grandeur of central Turkey’s Cappadocia region from 1,000 metres in the air with Kapadokya Balloons, which offers a 1.5-hour deluxe hot air balloon ride. Guests will fly above sweeping valleys and look down upon the ethereal “fairy chimneys” dotted around the semi-arid landscape, where limestone spires and pillars are now peppered with subterranean churches and dwellings etched into the rock. After the flight, there’s a traditional ceremony and champagne party.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

A NEW WAY TO EXPERIENCE THE KIMBERLEY IN 2025

For 60 years, APT Luxury Travel has been creating unforgettable outback explorations that go beyond the expected.

Immerse yourself in Australia's final frontier and experience the Kimberley in the tranquil luxury of our exclusive wilderness lodges, including the newly refurbished Mitchell Falls Wilderness Lodge.

Retreat to comfortable tented cabins with en suite bathrooms and private decks, and savour locally inspired dining with impeccable service throughout your adventure.

Experience the wilderness with a luxurious touch on our 15-day Kimberley Complete small group tour.



LUXURY TRAVELLERS

For those who prefer experiencing wild adventures in style and comfort, there are plenty of options to consider.



1

VIETNAM IN LUXURY

Discover the coastlines of Vietnam aboard Ponant's luxury yacht *Le Lapérouse*, with stylish rooms featuring private balconies and terraces, a range of gourmet restaurants and the unique Blue Eye underwater lounge. During your adventure, you'll cruise through various UNESCO World Heritage sites and enjoy on-shore excursions, such as the stunning beaches and ancient religious sites of seaside resort Nha Trang and the lively city of Da Nang and plenty more.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



2

KENYA FOR CONNOISSEURS

This handcrafted signature itinerary from Bench Africa has been curated with the discerning, safari connoisseur in mind. The dramatic landscape of Samburu National Reserve and the sheer abundance of wildlife in the Masai Mara are a perfect combination, whilst also showcasing the mesmerising and iconic cultures of Kenya. With beautiful accommodation in the prime locations of both national parks, guests can expect barefoot luxury that enhances the wildlife experience.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



3

PREMIUM JAPAN

Experience Japan's blend of ancient tradition and modern way of life on Intrepid's 12-day Premium adventure. The trip starts among Tokyo's soaring skyscrapers, before heading to Hakone's mountainous hot springs. Then, it's off to Takayama for its Edo-era beauty and the countryside of Shirakawa-go, before travelling to Kyoto and Hiroshima. Other highlights include a sushi-making class, onsen visits and travelling with a local leader as you visit temples, castles and shrines.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



4

TANZANIA UNDER CANVAS

Visitors will be captivated by the extraordinary game viewing and quintessential African landscapes on this safari through Tanzania. The parks in the north of the country boast open savannah, acacia trees and huge herds of game including one of the world's great wildlife spectacles, the annual Wildebeest Migration. On this adventure with Abercrombie&Kent, guests stay at luxury camps selected for their proximity to the wildlife.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



5

CRUISING THE KIMBERLEY

Purpose-built and ultra-luxurious, *Seabourn Pursuit* cruises to remote locations and boasts exceptional dining experiences, a dedicated expedition team and an array of relaxation and wellness spaces. With a maximum of 264 guests and all-veranda suites, there is no better way to experience the Kimberley coast. Guests may also combine land and cruise touring for the ultimate adventure of the Kimberley in a lap of luxury.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



6

SEARCH FOR SNOW LEOPARDS

Search for the elusive snow leopard on this exciting Himalaysian adventure at exclusive wilderness camp Lungmar in Ladakh at the heart of the Great Silk Road. Located 3,600m above sea level, the Lungmar blends ancient tradition with architecture, complete with purpose-built tents and en-suite bathrooms. Meanwhile, Lungmar's veteran team of snow leopard conservationists, trackers and guides accompany guests each day on their adventures.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



7



POLYNESIAN ISLAND HOPPING

Hop through the idyllic Cook Islands on this 13-day Polynesian adventure, exploring Rarotonga, Aitutaki and Atiu Island. During the day, travellers can enjoy lagoon fishing, island hiking, kiteboarding, diving and snorkelling along unspoiled beaches. Then there's the opportunity to explore underground caves, lush rainforests and coffee plantations, while also experiencing the fascinating village culture of the islands. And at night, relax in a number of private villas and luxurious resorts during the trip.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

8



WILD MALAYSIA

Opulence and adventure combine during this three-night rail journey through the Malaysian wilderness on board the Eastern and Oriental Express from LVMH-owned Belmond. The train boasts polished wood-panelled corridors, silken furnishings, jazz-inspired Bar Car and the indulgent Dior Spa. Departing from Singapore, guests will travel through the lush jungles of Malaysia's Taman Negara National Park and enjoy a range of excursions, before immersing themselves in the vibrant beauty of Penang and Johor.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

9



SAMOA IN STYLE

From rainforest to reef, this six-day adventure in beautiful Samoa offers both cultural immersion and exploration in the wilderness - while experiencing luxury boutique accommodation. The exclusive adults-only Sinalei Reef & Spa resort is the perfect getaway after a long day of snorkelling, kayaking and swimming in crystal waters. Highlights include exploring lush tropical rainforests, trekking along lava cliffs, gaining an insight into village life, indulging in farm-to-plate dining experiences and plenty more.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

10



THE ULTIMATE NZ LUXURY ADVENTURE

Accessible only by helicopter, the secluded Minaret Station Alpine Lodge is the last word in luxury lodge accommodation, remotely positioned in a high alpine meadow and surrounded by mountain views. Day experiences are tailored to all interests and fitness levels. Think luxury ocean and aviation journeys of Dusky Sound, private scenic flights around Fiordland, guided heli hiking exploring the backcountry or heli skiing for the ultimate New Zealand winter experience.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

SENIORS

Diverse adventures all over the world for the young at heart.



1

OFF-BEAT JAPAN

Prepare to immerse yourself in the quirky and wonderful culture of this fascinating land. Get off the beaten track and trek at the foot of Mount Fuji, meet the snow monkeys of Yudanaka and take a rickshaw ride through a bamboo forest. Guests will see all the classic highlights in Tokyo and Kyoto, too. This Wendy Wu tour includes a one-night stay in a traditional Japanese-style inn (known as a 'ryokan'), as well as one night's accommodation in a Buddhist lodge with simple shared facilities.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



2

PREMIUM MOROCCO IN DEPTH

Energetic cities give way to wild deserts and soaring peaks on Intrepid's 15-day Premium adventure through Morocco. Explore the blue washed streets of Chefchaouen, Meknes's animated medina, the historical town of Fes and the lively Djemaa el-Fna square in Marrakech. Sip tea with an Amazigh family in the Dades Valley, eat pastilla in the home of a Fes local and spend an evening beneath the stars in the Sahara. From varied culture to boundless hospitality, discover a country that defies expectations.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



3

WILD ANTARCTICA

Famed for its enormous icebergs, year-round sea ice, fascinating fossils and the pivotal role it played in Shackleton's Endurance expedition, the Weddell Sea offers unsurpassed opportunities for exploration. Embark on a true Antarctic expedition on board the *Greg Mortimer* with Aurora Expeditions. Explore the west Antarctic Peninsula, while venturing east towards the icy perimeter of the Weddell Sea, often guarded by impenetrable pack ice and home to awe-inspiring tabular icebergs that guests will hopefully view.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

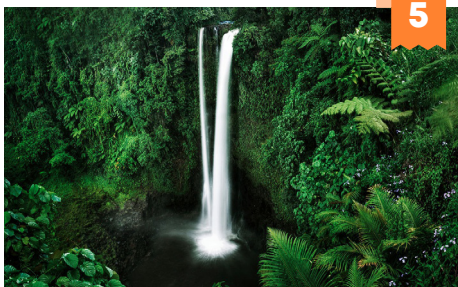


4

DISCOVER THE TASMAN GLACIER

Uncover New Zealand's largest glacier, the Tasman Glacier and its rapidly growing terminal lake, as you view icebergs of all sizes, set among the mountain views at the heart of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. Guests are welcome to touch and feel the floating icebergs, many of which are thousands of years old. This is undeniably one of the most unique experiences in New Zealand.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



5

UNCOVER THE REAL SAMOA

Go beyond the typical beach resorts of Samoa and discover the local culture and village life on this eight-day trip from Intrepid. Visitors will discover the ancient Star Mounds in Cape Falealupo, one of Samoa's most sacred locations, swim in the pristine waters at Papase'ea and enjoy highlights, including a fiafia night - a traditional celebration of dance, costumes, music and food cooked in an umu oven using hot volcanic rock.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



6

DISCOVER SOUTHWEST INDIA

Discover the rich tapestry of Southwest India, its diverse cultures and fascinating textile traditions on this unique journey. Led by former Powerhouse Museum curator and leading textiles expert, Christina Sumner OAM, the adventure will begin in Kerala and end in Bangalore. Travellers will visit the oldest synagogue built outside of Israel, social enterprise Shalom Ooty, Toda village, a silk factory and Hampi, the former capital of India's formidable Vijayanagara empire.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



7

FROM SARRIA TO SANTIAGO

A spectacular guided 12-day walk in northern Spain, covering the last 115km of the Camino at a relaxed pace of 10 to 18km a day - and experience the famous pilgrims mass. It's truly one of the world's greatest walks, covering a diverse range of terrain, from relatively flat to mountainous, with time to admire all the attractions, stop and take photos. The gates of Galicia lead on to the fabled Santiago de Compostela with its famous cathedral, site of the tomb of St James.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



8

ULTIMATE SOUTH PACIFIC

An epic tropical island hopping cruise from Taipei, Taiwan through the Philippines and Indonesia to Darwin on board the luxurious 140-guest expedition ship, *Heritage Adventurer*. Encounter rarely-visited tropical islands and cultures and admire fascinating birds and wildlife in primeval jungles. Highlights include Taiwan's Yehliu Geopark and the 19km long canyon Taroko National Park and Marble Gorge with its 300-foot-high marble walls. It's an unforgettable 19-day adventure with Heritage Expeditions.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



9

ALBANIA, KOSOVO AND NORTH MACEDONIA

An eye-opening 11-day journey through Albania, Kosovo and Northern Macedonia, as you immerse yourself in the vibrant cultures of the Balks. Unique highlights include visiting a historical artistic centre housed in an anti-nuclear bunker, hiking to waterfalls, experiencing traditional village life and warm rural hospitality and delving into the complex and evolving history of the Ottoman, Fascist and Soviet-eras.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



10

COCKY GUIDES: EXPERIENCES FOR BLIND AND LOW-VISION PEOPLE

Small group travel operator Cocky Guides is passionate about providing great travel experiences for blind and low-vision travellers. A diverse range of adventures are on offer, including a one-day trip to the Peninsula Hot Springs in Victoria, a four-day trip in Darwin and the Tiwi Islands, as well as a wonderland Melbourne snow tour and an outback adventure in North Queensland, plus plenty more.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

GOING SOLO

Solo travel is on the rise and savvy tour operators are now offering great experiences to cater for the market.



VIETNAM IN FULL COLOUR

Discover the essence of captivating Vietnam on Intrepid's 10-day tour through back streets, villages, cities and waterways. Trace the east coast on this fast-paced adventure and take in World Heritage-listed landscapes and towns, feel the buzz of bustling cities and fuel yourself with banh mi and condensed milk coffee. This is an adventure full of life, colour and flavour that introduces guests to the highlights of this fascinating nation. The average solo price is \$290 per person.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



KINGS CANYON RIM WALK

Embark on G'day Group's thrilling Kings Canyon Rim Walk in the Northern Territory, a 6km adventure that begins with a steep 500-step climb to the Canyon's edge. It takes three to four hours, but rewards travellers with breathtaking views. Navigate Priscilla's Crack, marvel at the Lost City's sandstone domes, and descend into the lush Garden of Eden. Cross a bridge over a sacred watering hole and capture the sunrise as it bathes the canyon in fiery oranges and reds.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



A PICTURE-POSTCARD WALK THROUGH THE AMALFI

The posterchild of Italy's southwest, the Amalfi Coast is a patchwork of postcard-perfect seaside towns and lush rural landscapes. Join Explore Worldwide's tour and walk the ancient stone stairways, limestone cliff paths and old mule tracks that link Campania's picturesque villages and discover Italian icons from Ravello to Positano and Capri. At the end of the day, relax and enjoy organic wine and farm-to-table food at a rustic agriturismo (a farm homestead).

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



CHINA: THE BIG ONE

Discover the heart of China on 'The Big One', Wendy Wu Tours' 28-day journey from the historic Great Wall to the modern skyline of Shanghai. Cycle through ancient cities, meet adorable pandas, and sail the majestic Yangtze River. With inclusive meals, accommodations, and expert guides, this tour offers an unparalleled blend of China's natural beauty and rich culture, tailored for those seeking adventure and cultural immersion. Single supplement and 'happy to share' options available.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



AFRICA FOR FEARLESS FEMALES

This exclusive ladies-only escorted tour from Bench Africa is an immersive escape over 12 days, incorporating wildlife, culture and adventure, welcoming women of all ages. Witness the ochre-red elephants of Tsavo East, the iconic Mt Kilimanjaro backdrop of Amboseli, the incredible Lake Naivasha and Lake Nakuru, and the world-famous Masai Mara Game Reserve, one of the most wildlife-rich safari areas in Africa. Best of all, there is no single supplement for anyone travelling solo.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



NORWAY: THE EXPEDITION OF A LIFETIME

Experience the majestic fjords and the Norwegian coast on the adventure of a lifetime with Aurora Expedition, as you cruise along the coastline and visit top Arctic destinations like Svalbard and Jan Mayen. The region is teeming with abundant wildlife and filled with spectacular landscapes wherever you look, from dramatic waterfalls and ancient glaciers to stunning fjords. Solo staterooms are available on Aurora's small ship *Douglas Mawson*.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



7

EXPLORE SRI LANKA

On this 15-day all-inclusive Wendy Wu tour, guests will be fully immersed within the beauty of Sri Lanka, travelling from Kandy and Colombo to Udawale and Polonnaruwa. Marvel at magnificent temples, see the World Heritage Rock Fortress at Sigiriya, search for elephants and other wild animals at Yala National Park. Then discover the fascinating caves at Dambulla and explore the ruined cities of Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura. Dedicated solo departures are available.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



8

ANTARCTIC ADVENTURES

An Antarctic cruise is perfect for single travellers, thanks to its friendly, communal and welcoming nature. Chimu Adventures offers the ultimate 12-day Antarctica experience on board its small ship, *Ocean Victory*, featuring daily excursions, Zodiac cruising and onboard expert lectures and briefings from its experienced expedition team. It's a special trip too, as there is no set itinerary. Instead, the team follows the ice charts and the weather conditions, as the ship sails through the Drake Passage and the South Shetland Islands.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



9

UNCOVER ETHIOPIA

The perfect trip for those who love nature, wildlife and authentic culture - while enjoying an adventure in a non-traditional destination. Several national parks in Ethiopia are untouched and rarely visited by tourists, including Chebera Churchura National Park, home to 37 larger mammals and 237 species of birds. Travellers will also have the chance to visit local tribes within their own villages, including the fascinating Mursi, Hamar, Karo, and other Omo valley tribes.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)



10

SWIM WITH WHALES IN NIUE

Take a trip to the tiny South Pacific island of Niue, famous for its coral reefs and limestone cliffs. It's also one of the few places in the world where snorkellers are welcome to swim with whales and observe them at play. There is also the opportunity for guests to hear haunting whale songs through a unique hydrophone speaker. The tours operate between mid-July and late September during breeding season.

For more information: [CLICK HERE](#)

Trends *to watch*

**WHAT YOU NEED TO
KNOW RIGHT NOW ABOUT
ADVENTURE TRAVEL.**

BY JANIE MEDBURY



1. OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Whether it's the vast, isolated landscapes of the Middle East or the untouched rainforests of Southeast Asia, adventure-seeking travellers are increasingly lured by unique, far-flung destinations where few tourists tread.

According to Brigid Avery from Wild World Travel, heightened awareness around overtourism and a desire to escape the crowds means globetrotters are venturing out to lesser-known places – think the hidden gems of Sri Lanka, or the adventure playground that is Costa Rica, home to Cloud Forests, volcano national parks and pristine beaches.

When intrepid wanderers opt to visit more well-trodden destinations, they do so outside of peak seasons. A report published earlier this year by the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) highlighted an uptick in shoulder-season travel to sought-after European destinations, and found that almost half of parents (47%) plan to take their children out of school in 2024 to travel outside of peak season.



2. CUSTOMISED AND CURATED

It makes sense that adventurous travellers want to explore the world on their own terms, and are turning to travel advisors to help them craft the perfect itinerary that caters to their specific needs and preferences.

“Post-COVID, customers are looking for unique experiences. They want something custom made for their needs, and they are happy to pay to get it,” says Gold Coast travel agent Nate Taiaroa, CEO of Adventure Out Loud.

Tailor-made adventure tours are especially ideal for groups and multi-generational families who may have more particular requirements, whether it be extra touches of luxury for those with generous budgets, or a slower pace with plenty of downtime between activities for those travelling with kids or elderly family members.

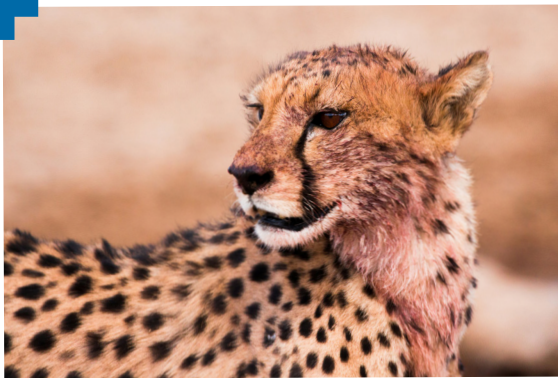


3. PEOPLE AND PLANET

The wellbeing of the planet is top-of-mind for adventure travellers, with a growing desire to support the local communities they visit and minimise their carbon footprints while exploring some of the world's wildest and most pristine natural destinations.

Many adventure operators are wholeheartedly embracing the eco movement. G Adventures has calculated a 'Ripple Score' for most of its tours, allowing travellers to view their impact on the places they visit, while Intrepid Travel has introduced carbon labels to 500 trips, helping customers make informed decisions.





4. EYES ON AFRICA

Those with a big appetite for adventure are heading to Africa, which has seen a 33% growth in visitors on organised adventures in 2023 compared to pre-pandemic 2019, according to the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA)'s 2024 Industry Outlook.

Egypt has reeled in 87% more bookings across TourRadar's operators since 2019, while safaris in Tanzania and Kenya also saw notable upticks.

Backroads' bookings for active African safaris for 2024 are nearly double 2023 numbers, while African adventure specialists Adventure Out Loud's safari, gorilla and chimp tours are growing in popularity.



5. HITTING THE ROAD

Roadtrips offer the ultimate freedom, and at a fraction of the cost of an overseas trip, which is why more Australians than ever are packing their 4WDs and campervans to explore their own backyard.

Caravan Industry Association of Australia's National Visitor Economy Report shows that Aussies took a total of 15.2 million overnight caravan and camping trips last year – up by 9% since COVID.

According to Turo's Summer Road Trip 2024 report, 54% of Aussies surveyed said they go on a driving holiday to enjoy new experiences, and 38% want to explore nature's wonders.



6. ADVENTURE FOR ALL

You needn't be young and fit to embark on an adventure travel experience – in fact, there is a much wider demographic flooding the segment now, from multi-gen families to elderly solo travellers.

"Age does not discriminate here," Avery emphasises, adding there is now a rising interest among older 'actives' in slower-paced tour.

Think walking ancient European routes or staying on an operational sheep station in New Zealand. Maybe hiking the Southern Alps or cycling through Bolivia.

Taiaroa has noticed most of his customers are aged 55-65 years.

"They have high disposable income, or are retired, they want to make the most of the time they have left to travel, and they are taking one or more high-end trips each year," he says.



7. FLIPPING HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS ON THEIR HEAD

Afghanistan, Iraq and Sierra Leone. Former war zones...and possibly, your next holiday destination.

According to the UN Tourism World Tourism Barometer website, the Middle East is seeing the strongest relative growth of all continents, with international arrivals in the first quarter of 2024 exceeding pre-pandemic levels by 36%, and Africa welcoming 5% more arrivals in Q1 of 2024 than in Q1 of 2019.

"Many travellers are drawn to these destinations to experience the aftermath of conflict and to gain a deeper understanding of the history, culture, and resilience of the local people," says David Smyth, Director at Forward Travel consultancy. ••



Q&A

WITH SHANNON STOWELL

From the rise of luxury adventure travel to the growth of diverse customer bases, Adventure Travel Trade Association CEO Shannon Stowell discusses the most interesting shifts he has observed in the sector.

INTERVIEW WITH JO-ANNE HUI-MILLER



Travel Daily: How would you describe adventure travel and what does it encapsulate?

Shannon Stowell: This is a question that we've spent a lot of time on over the last 20 years. And what we've found is that the word 'adventure' means different things to different people. So we did a pretty extensive traveller survey and found that there were three themes that resonated and kept popping up in people's responses - nature, culture and activity.

It's about getting into nature, really connecting with a local culture, and then being active in a way that could be as gentle as walking or as rigorous as ice climbing.

TD: What are some of the most interesting changes you've noticed in the adventure travel landscape?

SS: I think that the quest for authenticity has always been there, but it feels like it's a lot more prevalent now that people really want to better understand destinations. We hear that often described as slow travel. It's a way to really understand a place better, versus coming in, snapping a photo and then taking off to the next hotspot.

We're also seeing a lot of really high-end adventure travel is exploding in the category. People are willing to pay a lot of money for exclusive, interesting experiences where they may not necessarily be sleeping in a super expensive bed, or walking on marble floors in the bathroom, but maybe they're going deep into Mongolia with a tour operator and experiencing something that they could not have done otherwise. Then they may have some level of comfort at night, where they're staying in a really, really amazing gerd with amazing food and nice wine. It's a blend of luxury and experience.

There's really a shift towards people wanting more experiences versus stuff, after first, 9/11 and then Covid. I think there's a higher appreciation of nature.

TD: Can you tell me about the role that sustainability plays in adventure travel?

SS: That one's easy to answer because I think sustainability is front and centre of adventure travel. Part of it is because of those three pillars that I described - nature, culture and activity. Those first two values are really key to the success of adventure travel. So the protection of nature and cultures being completely overrun by tourists are top of mind

“THE PROTECTION OF NATURE AND CULTURES BEING COMPLETELY OVERRUN BY TOURISTS ARE TOP OF MIND.”

for the adventure travel industry.

In most of the companies that I know, my sense is that there's a really high desire to protect and for travellers to behave under the rules of the locals versus 10 or 20 years ago, where we often thought the customer is always right. Now we believe the customer is often wrong; not necessarily out of malintentions, but maybe they don't understand that grabbing a dolphin, parrot or anaconda for a photo isn't a good idea.

Where the customer used to be treated as king, more and more, we're encouraging [the people] within the communities [at our destinations] that they're the ones who know best and should lay the ground rules for travellers.

How has the industry responded? Of course, every company is a little bit different. Some have been really progressive by getting involved in climate action and making sure that the local people in the destinations that they visit are involved in the financial equation and that they're willing to be a part of the tourism process. »



“THERE ARE A LOT OF FOLKS FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, WITH DIFFERENT LIVED EXPERIENCES, WHO WANT TO DO THESE THINGS.”

About half of our members are either already certified by some sustainability program or are on their way there. We’re hoping to see a much higher percentage of that in the years to come. There are programs like Travelife that certifies tour operators, Green Key does hotels, Blue Flag does ships, beaches and marinas. We work with a lot of different organisations to bring their services and training to our members.

In many cases, our members bring to us the amazing things that they’re doing, which we share within our community and it becomes a hyper sharing environment. People are asking each other, “What are you doing about this? How are you dealing with this problem or that challenge?”

I love watching the creativity and the collegial sharing among competitors who, at the end of the day, are all using the same resources and saying, “Let’s make sure that we’re doing this.”

TD: The recent Adventure Travel Trade Association State of the Industry report showed that travel operators are interested in targeting a more diverse range of customers, from seniors and solo tourists to LGBTQIA+ travellers. Can you tell me about that?

SS: There are a lot of new entrants on the scene who are, in many cases, picking what [customer base] they’re most passionate about serving. That might be multigenerational. I know of an older gentleman who is creating an adventure travel business with his grandson for what they call “the skipped generation”.

I just got off the phone with another gentleman who runs an organisation that’s focused on offering opportunities for people with physical limitations. Maybe

Adventure travel operators are now targeting older customers and creating experiences to make them feel welcome.

they’re in a wheelchair, or need a cane to get from one one place to the other.


I’m really excited that more people are feeling free to pursue activities, even though, in the past, maybe they didn’t see people who looked like themselves [in adventure travel].

Our keynote speaker in North Carolina recently was a black man named Jeff Jenkins. He’s launched a TV program with National Geographic called *Never Say Never*, because he just didn’t see people like him going on the adventures that he wanted to do. It’s super empowering.

There have been reports that have made the economic case for [diversity] too. There are a lot of folks from different backgrounds, with different lived experiences, who want to do these things, but they’ve never felt like [adventure travel] was for them. Now there are operators who say, “Well, that’s me, and I would love to go after this audience, because I can relate to it and I think adventure should be for everyone.” ••

ADVENTURE IN NUMBERS

\$127 million

EXPERIENCE CO'S 17% YEAR-ON-YEAR INCREASED REVENUE IN ITS LATEST Q4 RESULTS. 

4,500 m³ 

THE AMOUNT OF LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS STORED WITHIN PONANT'S FIRST FRENCH SHIP IN HISTORY TO REACH THE NORTH POLE.

130

THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PASSENGERS THAT EXPEDITION CRUISE LINE AURORA WILL TAKE TO ANTARCTICA AND THE ARCTIC FROM NOW ON.

 **71%** 






THE INCREASE OF PASSENGERS SAILING ON EXPEDITION ITINERARIES FROM 2019 TO 2023.

— STATE OF THE CRUISE INDUSTRY REPORT, 2024

\$1.3 billion

INTREPID'S PREDICTED REVENUE BY 2030, 1% OF WHICH WILL GO TO PURPOSE-LED INITIATIVES.

TOP 5 
MOST IN-DEMAND TRIPS

- 1 CUSTOM ITINERARIES 
- 2 SOFT ADVENTURES 
- 3 REMOTE DESTINATIONS/TRAILS 
- 4 CULINARY-FOCUSED ADVENTURES 
- 5 E-BIKE ITINERARIES 

— STATE OF THE ADVENTURE TRAVEL INDUSTRY REPORT, ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRADE ASSOCIATION

95

THE NUMBER OF YEARS *THE GHAN* HAS TRAVELLED BETWEEN DARWIN AND ADELAIDE.

80 

THE DESTINATIONS THAT *SILVERSEA'S* EPIC WORLD CRUISE WILL VISIT IN 2027, ITS MOST IMMERSIVE VOYAGE EVER.

“

WE ALL BELIEVE SO PASSIONATELY [IN EGYPT]...WE HAVE THAT POWER TO BRING PEOPLE TO FANTASTIC PLACES, AND WE NEED TO BRING PEOPLE BACK TO EGYPT.”

— ELLEN BETTRIDGE, GLOBAL CEO, UNIWORLD

