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DECEMBER 2011 ON DECK



From all of us here at Wings Away, we thank you for your business, and wish you warm Festive Greetings, and a bright and Happy New Year !

With Christmas almost upon us, we reflect upon yet another interesting, and sometimes challenging year in travel. Another volcanic ash cloud, an earthquake and tsunami in Japan, the devastating earthquake in Christchurch, and recently the temporary shut down of Qantas, were all sent to try us, and decimated travel plans worldwide. Each of these events saw us, and travel agents everywhere, working tirelessly to reconstruct/reorganise/re-book complicated travel itineraries for our appreciative clients. Travellers without an agent had a very different story to tell, and our long used slogan – “Without a travel agent you are on your own – was very true indeed”.

This year our clients took full advantage of the strong Australian dollar, travelling to the USA in large numbers, and also to Asia where currencies are also relatively weak against our own. This was also the year when we heard the words London and cheap in the same sentence!! Fans of ocean cruising enjoyed discovering new destinations, on new ships, at amazing prices, while in our own region, we have an unprecedented number of fabulous ships now calling Australia home. At the same time, our clients have been discovering river cruising in droves, with many new ships, and rivers to explore across the globe. Those who enjoy our escorted group tours, travelled with us to New Zealand, Shanghai, Europe, Canada and Alaska, the USA and Africa.

Bookings are very strong for the coming 2012 year. The London Olympics and Queen's Jubilee year are the catalyst for many travellers heading that way, with the obvious flow on to Europe. Our dollar is predicted

to remain strong, also meaning the USA will continue to be popular. Who knows what extraordinary events will come along to test our mettle!! We just excitedly hang on and enjoy the ride!!

Stay tuned
Anne Rogers - Managing Director

For our Armchair travellers:

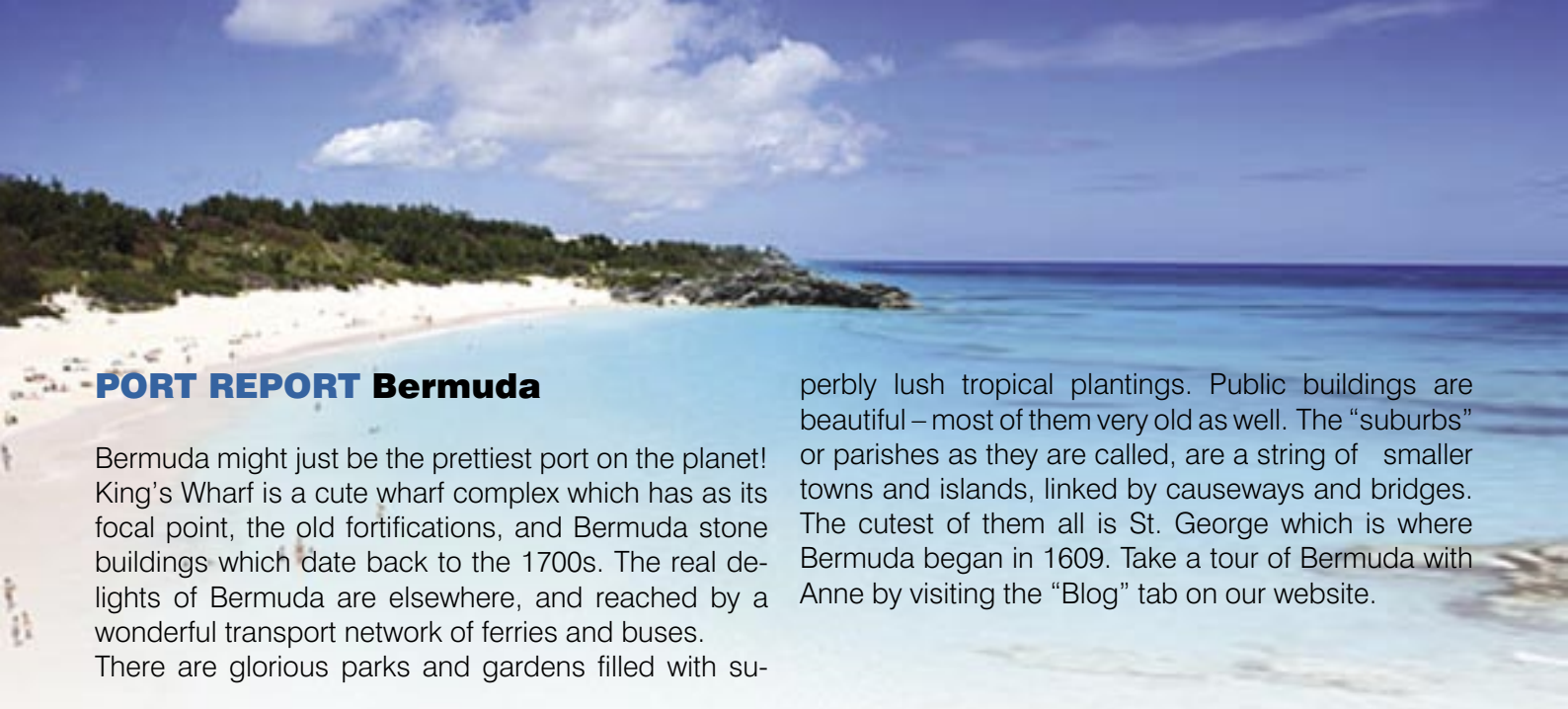


Listen to Anne Rogers on 3AW with Denis Walter -

Mondays at 1.05pm. Read all about it ! Anne Rogers' travel stories appear under the “Blog” tab on our website. - Tales from Along the Way

LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE

Such people are often the subject of urban myths however, I can report that Barry & I recently met, and dined with, Mr. Egon Landsberg, who is actually a permanent cruise passenger. Egon, of Swiss heritage but a lifetime resident of Canada, is 94. In assessing suitability of retirement accommodation he quickly came to the conclusion that a permanent home on the waves, was by far the most attractive option. Egon's home for the past 12 months has been MSC's Poesia. To read the full story go to the “Blog” tab on our website.



PORT REPORT Bermuda

Bermuda might just be the prettiest port on the planet! King's Wharf is a cute wharf complex which has as its focal point, the old fortifications, and Bermuda stone buildings which date back to the 1700s. The real delights of Bermuda are elsewhere, and reached by a wonderful transport network of ferries and buses. There are glorious parks and gardens filled with su-

perbly lush tropical plantings. Public buildings are beautiful – most of them very old as well. The “suburbs” or parishes as they are called, are a string of smaller towns and islands, linked by causeways and bridges. The cutest of them all is St. George which is where Bermuda began in 1609. Take a tour of Bermuda with Anne by visiting the “Blog” tab on our website.



SHIP REPORT Royal Caribbean's Radiance of the Seas

Radiance is beautiful – from top to bottom. Truly an international super liner and Royal Caribbean can justly claim to having raised the bar in local cruising. The ship has just undergone a massive refit, meaning she is effectively brand new for her Australian season. Cabins (mostly with balconies), are spacious and well appointed. Smiling service throughout the ship by an “all nations” crew is a given. There is an enormous array of activities throughout the ship, all day and well into the night – truly something for everyone, and with an average guest age of 47, the ship works hard to achieve this. Large interactive “GPS” screens are dotted around the ship, and a quick click tells you what is on “right now” and exactly where. Dining options are similarly plentiful with everything available, from a “design your own” salad in the Park Cafe to traditional cruise dining in the lovely two level Cascades Dining Room. Stand out value for money is the priciest of the alternate dining venues – the Chef's Table dining and paired wine private dining experience at \$95 p.p. A truly amazing meal enjoyed in a beautiful room which seats just 14. Entertainment is outstanding whether casually convened at various venues around the ship, or concert style in the Aurora Theatre. See for yourself, before Radiance of the Seas leaves Australia on 22 April (returning in September) .

Travellers Tales

This issue features our clients Pat and Carl del Mico

- **Where have you travelled this year?**
A week in Bali in March, and shortly we depart on the Christmas cruise on Radiance Of The Seas.
- **What do you have planned next year?**
Still deciding, but leaning towards Egypt because we missed out this year.
- **What's on the Wish List?**
Egypt, and Antarctica.
- **Do you have a travel tip to share?**
Save your digital photographs in more than one place, (we use Picasa Albums via Google), just in case.

Where have we been?

You name it and chances are at least one of us has been there. Our staff love to travel and never miss an opportunity to visit and research new destinations – someone has to do it!!

Recently, our travels have included:

- Jonathan Andrew** Greece, Abu Dhabi, flying Etihad Airways; London, Paris, and Southern France, Dubai, flying Emirates;
- Maree** Africa, flying Malaysia Airlines, River cruising in Europe;
- Elise Anne** Gold Coast; Radiance of the Seas, MSC Kiel and Rhapsody of the Seas.

Take the journey by reading our reports on www.wingsaway.com.au

ESCORTED TOURS BROCHURE FOR 2012

Your personal copy of our 2012/2013 Escorted tours brochure is enclosed. We are very proud and excited to have a wide variety of tours to offer you for the coming year. All tour details are on our website : www.wingsaway.com.au, but we especially like to talk about them, so call **Maree on 93373744** for more information, or a brochure on your favourite.



2012 THEMED MUSIC CRUISES - All on Rhapsody of the Seas - Sailing from Sydney

14-23 Oct Rock the Boat – 50's/60's music featuring Chubby Checker, Normie Rowe, Russell Morris and so many more.

4-11 Nov Cruisin' Country – featuring Kasey Chambers and the cream of Australian country music, line dancing and clogging

11-14 Nov Elvis Tribute Cruise

14-18 Nov 60's/70's Music Cruise – 14 acts

Colour brochures available for all cruises and full artist lineups at www.wingsaway.com.au

WINGS AWAY IN AFRICA

4/28 November, 2011

We have been right out there in Africa!

No, we have not been on a luxurious safari, never far from city comforts – we have been to the Southern Africa outback!

Our journey (we were a group of 11 Adventurers) of over 5000 kms was in a purpose built Safari Truck, air conditioned when the panoramic windows were open, as they often were for fabulous photographic opportunities. Being high up always gave us the best possible views. Add to this the outstanding knowledge of our Zimbabwean driver guide, Adam and we could not help but have an amazing time.

Victoria Falls, viewed from both Zambia & Zimbabwe provided a great tour opener. From there it was all about animals as we visited famous National Parks such as Chobe in Botswana, Etosha in Namibia & the Kalahari Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park in South Africa. The scenery along the way was varied and usually spectacular especially in Namibia where we will have lasting memories of the red dunes in the Namib Naukluft Park, the Atlantic ocean meeting the desert and the happy children in the humble villages.

Our accommodation, often in unique locations delivered many surprise – all good!



We loved the vastness of Southern Africa, the animal encounters of course, and mostly the fact that we could relax in the bush. No make-up, no hairdryers nor irons! Wearing the same shorts five days in a row became the comfortable “norm”.

This tour will be repeated!

Maree McClelland - Tour Manager

New Faces



LAURA GEE

Laura, is our long tall Texan, and we are thrilled to have her as our Groups Co-ordinator. Laura is very well travelled, and has a wealth of experience to offer our group tour clients. We asked Laura a few background questions below:

How long have you been a Travel Adviser?

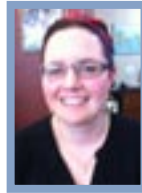
6 years;

Where did you travel last? Not counting my regular trips to visit family and friends in South Texas, the last holiday I had was a week in Berlin, a week in Riva Del Garda, Italy, then ending my holiday with four days in Venice before coming home;

Where to next? Frequent changes of mind on what I want to do for my next holiday is an occupational hazard. The idea du jour is Russia. I was last in Russia in 1987 when it was still the Soviet Union! I'd really love to see the changes that have occurred over the last 24 years;

What's on the Bucket List? It's my life-long dream to step foot on all 7 continents. Technically I only have Antarctica to go. I say 'technically' because I've been to Morocco, but I don't really feel that I've been to Africa

Do you have a travel tip to share? I have three tips. Firstly, I always learn a few phrases in the local language. You'd be amazed at how appreciative folk are if you can, at least, say 'hello', 'goodbye', 'please' and 'thank you' in their own tongue. Secondly, I always have a look at what the local women are wearing and match them for modesty. If the local women are all wearing skirts below the knees and blouses with sleeves then I won't go around in a sundress. Lastly, I always respect local customs even if I don't understand them. This is especial important when local customs differ greatly from ours.



JESSICA FALZON

Jessica, is our newest recruit and joins us as a Senior Retail Travel Adviser. Jess is also very well travelled, with much personal knowledge and technical expertise gained in her 5 years in a similar role. Jess tells us a little more about herself below:

How long have you been a Travel Adviser?

5 years;

Where did you travel last? The north island of New Zealand;

Where to next? Vietnam and Cambodia;

What's on the Bucket List? 1. Sabah to see the Orang-utans, 2. Scandinavia to see the northern lights and 3. To go and see Santa in Lapland – I'm a big kid at heart;

Do you have a travel tip to share? I always make sure I take my blow up coat hangers and elastic clothes line with me as it's a convenient way to quickly wash some of your essentials and with the blow up hangers your shirts dry faster.

BY APPOINTMENT

Consultations with our Retail and Cruise advisers are "By Appointment". This ensures proper preparation is made for your visit and uninterrupted time available to spend with you.

Please phone ahead on **9337-3744**.

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& CRUISELAND *travel*

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