

# Creating ADVENTURES

## POLE TO POLE

It's **January**, and a great month to plan your **Polar Adventure for 2025**. Whether it be **Svalbard, Iceland or Greenland** over the summer months, the iconic **North West Passage in August or September** or you are thinking of venturing 'South' to **Antarctica, South Georgia** or the **Ross Sea** next winter, contact **Fiona** now and she will steer you through the bewildering array of ships and itineraries to find the best option to suit you.

With the **Russian Arctic** out of bounds, many of our polar ships are venturing further afield to exotic locations such as **Japan, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia** and the **South Pacific** bringing an expedition vibe to areas previously the domain of the cruise ship. The world is your oyster...what are you waiting for?



Dear Adventurer

As we enter our 25th year, it's rather fitting that we've just come away from the busiest year since I started Far Frontiers Travel. We planned some incredibly diverse holidays this year – from Antarctica to Oman, from Egypt to Colombia, from Georgia to Mongolia, Costa Rica to Iceland and many places in between. We could not do this without you, our incredible and loyal clients so I thank you for your support – keep those innovative travel ideas coming.

*Fiona Brijnath*

Fiona Brijnath, Director

## TREKKING WITH YAKS IN SWITZERLAND

Yes, you read correctly - experience the magic of the Swiss mountains like never before with a unique trekking adventure. Join a small group (6-10 people) and traverse breathtaking landscapes, share in authentic nomadic experiences and journey through serene alpine trails accompanied by yaks. Only for the adventurous as you bring your own tents and cook for yourself.



**When:** Four trek departures of between 2 and 4 days between June and October.  
**Ask for:** 2025 dates and prices

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# Costa Rica – Pura Vida!

Even the gushing river and rhythmic chirrup of the cicadas could not mask the haunting sound of the howler monkey's echoing calls reverberating around the tree canopy.



We've been in **Costa Rica** barely 24 hours and yet my husband, self and two sons have packed in a whole bucket of incredible experiences. Our journey began with a thrilling two hours' rafting on the grade III-V **Pacuare River** deep into tropical rainforest where we alternately drifted and paddled like fury, bouncing and swerving over tumbling rapids and swam off the raft under gushing waterfalls. Finally, rounding a bend in the river we reached **Pacuare Lodge**, 20 top-notch villas set on the banks of the river and surrounded by tropical forest, tangled vines, ficus and gigantic palms.

Barely two hours later and much fortified by a delicious lunch of ceviche, portobello mushrooms and fresh fruit smoothies we were onto the next adventure - zipping through the tree canopy along an intricate network of wires strung from tree platform to platform enjoying a wild ride. Our guides are incredible - making every activity safe but hugely fun - knowing just when to bounce or jiggle a rope and give my sons that extra adrenaline rush while at the same time being gentle with the parents! We hike to a nearby waterfall and abseil down 15m canyons - too much fun for a 19 and 21-year-old. It's not for the faint hearted but what a sense of achievement when you finally reach terra firma!



Night falls like a theatre curtain in the rainforest and soon we were on a fascinating night walk seeing tarantulas, bats, tree frogs and even the very venomous Fer-de-lance snake.

Two days later we left the lodge with heavy hearts despite a thrilling 3 ½ hour raft out. We dropped over a class IV rapid into a hydro-hole and had to be pulled out by our fellow rafters. It was a new experience for me and I realise it's not for everyone but put it at the top of your list for those who like adventure. We emerged from a rough, steep sided moss and fern-walled canyon overhung with a twisted and tangled profusion of trees. It's real 'lost land' territory out here. Lunch was served on the river bank - table cloth and all: spicy burritos, cocoa brownies and huge chunks of fresh watermelon washed down with iced tea.

It's 430am. The palest of dawn skies is etched with threatening clouds and sheet lightning illuminates the fringe of palms across the river while thunder crashes noisily and in the background the hauntingly ethereal calls of the howler monkey echo through the rainforest. We're now in **Tortuga Lodge** on the **Caribbean** coast and day five of our trip is just dawning. It's hard to believe how much we've experienced already.



We enjoyed the lodge's **Caribbean** vibe and river location - close to the entrance of **Tortuguero National Park**. Our days are spent kayaking through narrow verdant jungle channels looking for caiman, howlers and white-faced capuchins. We spot an anteater high on a branch above our heads and often hear the gentle plop of a turtle slipping off a nearby log. My favourite was a large green prehistoric iguana which climbed to dizzy heights and lay languidly in a tree overlooking the swimming pool.

In the cloud forest of **El Silencio** it's all gushing waterfalls and dripping ferns. We hiked and mountain biked up a gorge in a memorable two-hour walk ending in style in a bubbling outdoor hot tub as the curtain of night descended around us.



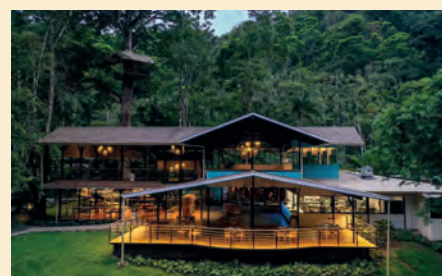
Moving north to **Arenal**, we walked on lava from the 1968 volcanic eruption and descended into lava forest in a thunderous tropical rain-storm before ending the day unwinding at a beautiful natural hot springs with pools ranging from 29 to 40° Celsius.

A week later we were excited to cross to the **Pacific** coast to explore **Manuel Antonio National Park**. This is wildlife by profusion and with no boundaries between forest and building - right in the village we encountered a lazily drifting sloth at the roadside. Our hotel was perched high on a bluff with ocean on two sides and the tree canopy around us alive with howler and squirrel monkeys, black vultures and the incredibly impressive scarlet macaws.

We spent a wonderful morning in the national park, with sloths and howlers above and lizards crawling underfoot. It was hot and humid and we cooled off with a glorious swim in a bay fringed with swaying palms, where jungle met ocean. We lunched at a beach shack on chilled watermelon smoothies and shrimp tortillas with calamari and the boys surfed in a thunderstorm.

**Lapa Rios** aptly named *rivers of macaws* was the standout of the trip. We certainly saved the best till last. It's deep south **Costa Rica** - from the capital, **San Jose**, a 45 minute Cessna flight and 45 minute 4X4 drive. The **Gulf of Dulce** opened out before us in a stunning panorama as we ascended the last hill to the thatched open-air reception. Toucans hopped along branches above our heads as we drank fresh passionfruit juice and we spied humpback whales (Aug-Oct) in the distant bay while huge colourful scarlet macaws glided across great swathes of primary rainforest before our very eyes.

The walk to our villa with outdoor shower, plunge pool and glorious ocean views was a nature walk in its own league. The trees above us trembled as tiny burnt-orange squirrel monkeys deftly leapt from branch to branch occasionally interacting with the larger dark brown spider monkeys which hung and swung by their tails while feeding in the early dawn.



At sunrise, the giant iguanas came down from their roosts in the trees and the echoing eerie sound of the howler monkeys reverberated around the treetops - my favourite rainforest sound.



We happened across a family of 13 coatimundis - tails up - feeding on the path outside our room and an agouti came to join the melee as we headed out for dawn birding. The boys surfed in a glorious palm tree and coconut strewn bay - declaring it 'the best' and my naturalist husband could not put down his binoculars. We tracked rivers and wild waterfalls deep in the **Lapa Rios Private Reserve** and left a bit of our hearts here as we returned to **San Jose** and our last night at a *finca* on a verdant coffee farm in the hills above the city.

It would take too many superlatives to describe **Costa Rica**. It's an assault on the senses (in a good way). You just have to go and see it for yourself.



In summary:

- Incredible profusion of wildlife
- Great adventure for families - canopy zip lining, rafting, waterfalls, canyoning
- Easy travel between locations
- Friendly locals
- Great food and lovely boutique hotels
- Beautiful coastline

Contact **Fiona** to plan your own special trip.



## NEW HORIZONS: SOUTH KOREA

We have recently started working with lovely partners in this little visited corner of **SE Asia**. You'll find rich heritage and natural beauty, tradition, history, palaces, temples, National Parks, UNESCO villages and vibrant markets - ask for a sample itinerary.



## LAND OF THE FJORDS BY SHIP

Explore the rich tapestry of Nordic history and culture woven into spectacular landscapes, celebrating the rugged coastal beauty of **Norway**. Traverse majestic fjords, wander through storybook fishing villages adorned with red cabins and Viking longhouses on the enchanting **Lofoten Islands**.

Take leisurely strolls through art nouveau towns like **Ålesund** and cosmopolitan **Bergen**, all while soaking in views of mountains, waterfalls and fertile valleys.

**Your ship:**  
192 passenger **SH Diana**

**When:**  
21-31 July 2025

**Price:**  
From £9,880 per person, add flights to fit.





## WHY GEORGIA?

**Georgia** is one of the world's oldest Christian countries and has amazing history and ancient cultural heritage with spectacular churches carved into hillsides, monasteries, wineries and **Roman** fortresses. You'll find friendly people many of whom speak English, wonderful hospitality, great cuisine and very special wines. Much of the country is covered by the magnificent **Caucasus Mountains** and has spectacular scenery contrasting from 5000m peaks to the **Black Sea** coastline, green valleys to the beautiful **Kakheti** wine country. Many visitors combine a holiday here with **Armenia**.

We've great news for those thinking about travelling to **Georgia** - on 30 March 2025 **British Airways** will launch four direct flights per week from **London Heathrow** to the capital, **Tbilisi**.

We highly rate this hidden gem of a country with its affordable boutique hotels, safe environs and excellent connectivity. **UK, USA** and **Canadian** citizens don't require visas.

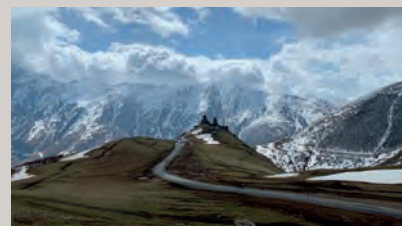
**And the proof of the pudding...**

We had a fabulous and memorable holiday to **Georgia** - all thanks to your excellent knowledge and organisation. With wonderful sunny weather, we had beautiful views of the countryside on our journeys, especially the enchanting long avenues of walnut trees. Every church, cathedral and monastery we visited was truly wonderful. The **Uplistsikhe** cave town was fascinating. In **Gori** we got our first understanding of the invasion by **Russia** in 2008, and driving by the border with the **Russian** occupied area was very profound.

Seeing the outside of the **Romanov Palace** near **Akhaltikhe** was beautiful. One of the real highlights was experiencing the **Vardzia** cave complex and the drive back to **Tbilisi** through the bleak and rather **Mongolian-like** landscape was very interesting - the finale being walking

across the **Diamond Bridge**. The journey to **Kazbegi** had some interesting moments - driving through tunnels built by the **German** PoWs in World War II. We got very close to the **Russian** border and visited the **Dariali Monastery** with its own **Qvevri** wine cellars where they were fermenting grapes imported from **Kakheti**. We arrived in **Kazbegi** in thick fog, but the next morning opened the curtains to the most stunning vista imaginable - the sun rising behind **Gergeti Trinity Church**. **Zura** was an excellent driver, very courteous and helpful, and **Tamar** was absolutely wonderful, knowledgeable and informative. We learnt such a lot about **Georgian** history and modern politics.

**Mr & Mrs Robin Davies**  
**Georgia - September 2024**



**Why not get in touch with Fiona for a tailor-made quotation?**

## Snippets



## THE BRITANNIC EXPLORER

**Let the train take the strain**

New for 2025 is **England** and **Wales'** first luxury sleeper train. Departing from **London**, unforgettable three-night journeys through the stunning landscapes of **Cornwall**, the **Lake District**, and **Wales** will be available from **July to November 2025**. Each route is enriched by off-train excursions that immerse travellers in local culture, history, and scenic grandeur. By evening, the bar becomes a lively social hub where guests can unwind. Combine regional journeys: **Cornwall** and the **Lake District** routes run **Friday to Monday**, while **Wales** departs **Monday to Thursday**, creating an expanded adventure across **Britain**.

**Prices from: £5,700 per person**

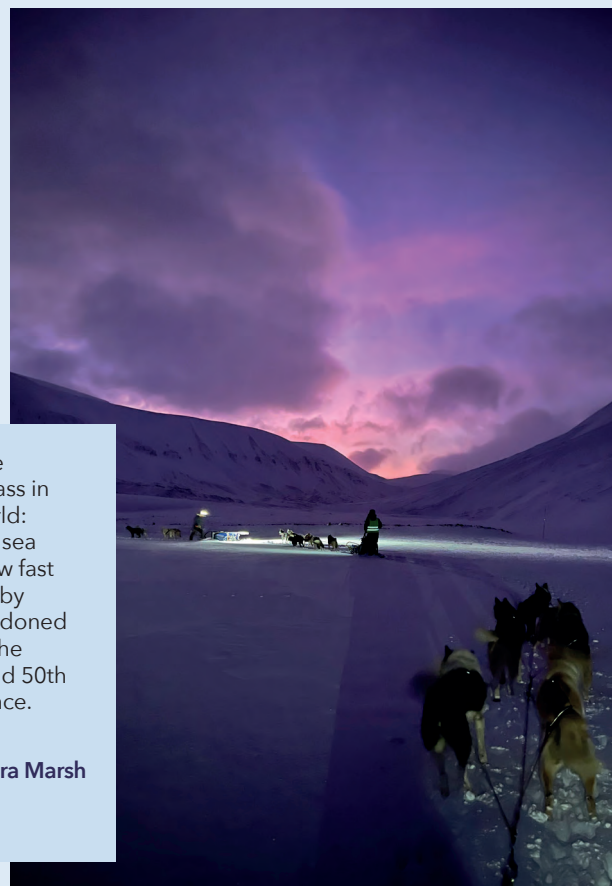
**Contact Fiona:** For a short break with a difference

## SVALBARD'S POLAR NIGHT

In **January**, the **Polar Night** is in full swing over the remote northerly outpost of **Spitsbergen** in the **Svalbard Archipelago**. The snow adds a touch of magic to this extraordinary **Arctic** landscape and this is the time for thrilling dog sledding and stunning ice cave adventures.

The dark season is a truly unique experience, with only the northern lights, the moon, and the stars casting their ethereal glow across the polar wilderness. The adventure season begins in full force mid-**February** with the first snowmobile trips to one-of-a-kind outpost, **Isfjord Radio**. Book last minute for a **February-April** adventure or why not book ahead - for **Christmas 2025** - sure to be a festive holiday with a difference?

The intrepid **Marsh** family visited in **August** - here's what they had to say...



Simply, thank you. We've had a unique experience. Your partners were first class in every way. The lodge was another world: glacier ice collecting in the rib, hiking, sea swimming, glacier walking and the new fast boat out and open rib back, stopping by **Pyramiden** and getting off at the abandoned beach and hunting cabin. You nailed the brief! A perfect 20-year anniversary and 50th Birthday! 'Chapeau' as they say in France. Where are we going next?

**Mr & Mrs Toby Marsh, Farley and Kendra Marsh**  
**The Arctic: Land based - Spitsbergen**  
**August 2024**

## GOLF IN VIETNAM

May 2024 saw the opening of **Eschuri Vung Bau Golf Course** on **Vietnam's** tropical **Phu Quoc Island** in the **Bay of Thailand**. This championship 18-hole course offers challenges for all levels of players. Set against the stunning backdrop of **Vung Bau Beach**, it blends natural terrain with breathtaking sea views. We've more statistics on the course if you are keen to weave it into a holiday in **Vietnam**. There are daily flights available from both **Hanoi** and **Saigon** to reach the island.

Contact **Fiona** for more details.





## TRIBAL INDIA

At 533 and counting, India's tribal population is scattered in remote corners of the country. From the camel-herding **Fakirani Jats** to the matriarchal **Rabaris**, we have strong connections with these tribes who roam across the **Rann of Kutch** and southern **Rajasthan**. Events like the **Kavant Mela** in **Gujarat** held annually (approximately **17-19 March** in **2025**) connect you to tribes who live in very remote areas.

In **Central India** we visit the native **Gonds**, known for their art, which is steeped in legend and folklore and the rugged **Baigas** renowned for the tattoos that the women sport all over their bodies, strong sense of community living, and open-minded approach to relationships.

In the **Himalayas**, we love to engage with the **Drokpa** in **Ladakh** who, legend has it, are descendants of **Alexander the Great's** army. Free-spirited and joyful, you will be charmed by their smiles and charisma.

We help you to learn more about tribal culture, interact with or photograph them, in an ethical manner.

Ask **Fiona** to work her magic on an itinerary with a difference in **India**.

## TRAVELLING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GHENGIS KHAN

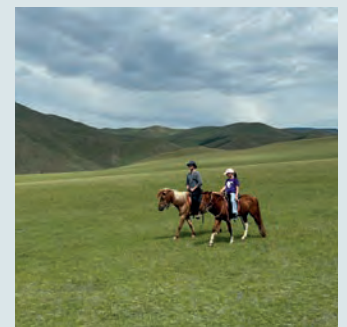
The incredibly adventurous and fun **Allfrey** family asked us for help in organizing their holiday to **Mongolia** last summer. This is what they had to say...

*Thank you so much for everything - we didn't really realise until we got there how impossible it would have been to try to do the trip in any other way, and we are so grateful for all the hard work done by you and by the whole team in **Mongolia**.*

Highlights:

- The **flaming cliffs, sand dune** and **petroglyphs** in the **Gobi**
- The giant **Chinggis Khan statue**
- The **Naadam Festival** - in exactly the sort of small local place we had been hoping for. We ended up watching the wrestling in **Dalanzadgad**, and it was brilliant. We were there for hours, the only tourists there, and it was totally fascinating and entertaining. A big success. The horse racing was fabulous if unspeakably windswept!
- We adored the **camel herder**.
- The **eagle hunters** were very generous with their time, their clothes, their food, their eagle and their horses.
- The riding was great fun, and well-pitched for us

**Alexander & Martha, Jack, William, Stanley, Frank and Rose Allfrey**  
**South Gobi & Western Mongolia With Naadam Festival - July 2024**



## ULTIMATE BEAR

Polar and Grizzlies on one trip

Ask us about our **Ultimate Bear Viewing Adventure** in **Canada** - an extraordinary chance to view these two iconic carnivores in the same trip - **Grizzly Bears** on the **British Columbia** coast and **Polar Bears** on the shores of **Hudson Bay** in **Northern Manitoba**. The seasons to view these wonderful creatures overlap for only a brief time each year and our unforgettable 13 day adventure awaits you.

**2025 departures:**  
 2, 7 and 10 October - 13 day trip

**Price from:**  
 £10,780 per person



# Client COMMENTS

We're safely back after a great trip we both enjoyed immensely, for which many thanks! The boat is "well found", a pleasure to sail on, and she coped with the conditions under the command of the very capable captain, **Joachim**, who was passionate about getting the sails up whenever possible! There were two other passengers who were experienced sailors on board (one of whom had completed part of the "Clipper" Round the World Race) who shared this opinion. The weather ordained which days were coastal cruising, and which were land trips and trekking, all of which we enjoyed. We were lucky with the whale watching and the Aurora too.

**Mr & Mrs Charles James**  
Northeast Iceland Explorer aboard  
Rembrandt Van Rijn - October 2024



Still struggling to come to terms with no longer enjoying the ambience of the ship. Very many thanks for, as always, your most efficient and friendly handling of all the pre-departure arrangements for the **North West Passage**. Outstandingly good service for which I am most appreciative and will have no hesitation in recommending **Arcturus** whenever the opportunity arises. The pre departure arrangements were excellent - efficient and friendly. The trip itself was particularly good - meeting expectations and aspirations in equal measure. A highly memorable experience.

**Alfie Ingram & Martina Alexanderova**  
Into the Northwest Passage aboard Ocean Endeavour - August 2024



This was the culmination of a long-held wish to see something of the **Arctic**. The choice provided by **Arcturus** was extensive, with helpful advice on selecting our holiday. Our expectations of the holiday were high, but comfortably exceeded. It was an outstandingly good trip (and we've had a few such with you!). The ship was every bit as comfortable and well-appointed as you had led us to believe. It's difficult to single out the best aspects of the trip: the scenery was breathtaking much of the time, the sense of adventure was always present, the enthusiasm and expertise of the various members of the expedition team was most impressive and we had numerous fantastic opportunities to view and photograph scenery and wildlife. Thanks once again for all your help in making this happen.

**Andrew Mounstephen & Suzanne Waterer**  
Arctic Svalbard Odyssey aboard Greg  
Mortimer - August 2024



It was a super trip! Again, your organisational skills, experience and advice are second to none, **Fiona**! Your attention to the small details of the trip meant that it went like clockwork and we did not need to worry about anything! **Sea Spirit's** cabin you suggested was very comfortable and we were pleased with your recommendation to upgrade. The staff in the restaurant were exceptional! **Greenland** was quite different. Seeing the glaciers in their raw state, was fascinating as you could see the rocks and layering of the millions of years! The trip to **Ittoqqortoormitt** was interesting.... what a harsh environment! I would have no hesitation in recommending you, your skills and knowledge to anyone looking for problem free travel/holiday. Thank you. Looking forward to my next trip with you at the helm!

**Elizabeth May travelling with Anthea Gawel**  
East Greenland aboard Sea Spirit -  
September 2024



As you are aware, we travel extensively but mostly independently. We have used you for **Antarctica/Bhutan/Laos** and we will always contact you when we are looking for something a little more niche. We value your easy manner and incredible attention to detail. My greatest compliment is that I couldn't organise things better myself, and, trust me, I am very detailed when planning our independent trips! **Pandaw** is excellent - very good food, staff superb including an excellent guide, plenty of activities, AND you reserved us what we think is probably the best cabin on the boat!

**Mr & Mrs Peter Lacey**  
Laos Mekong River Trip by Pandaw - October 2024

We have had a fantastic trip. Very many thanks for all your excellent and efficient organisation and support for our trip; much appreciated. We will be recommending your services to our friends and contacts.

**Mr & Mrs David Greer**  
Under The Northern Lights: Iceland  
and East Greenland aboard Ocean  
Adventurer - September 2024



**Travel with confidence:** All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays in this newsletter are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. **Please see the booking conditions on our websites for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: [www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate](http://www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate).**

Clients wishing to book their own international flights are financially protected by the **TOPP (Total Payment Protection)** scheme. Full details are given on both Arcturus and Far Frontiers Travel websites under 'Your financial protection'.

