

Creating ADVENTURES

DOG SLEDGE FINNMARK

We have new partners for **Arctic Norway** adventures. How do you feel about cozy and authentic log cabins in a beautiful wilderness in **Northern Norway**? Enjoy dog sledging beyond the beaten track, a snowmobile tour, snow shoeing or cross country skiing, a night adventure hunting for northern lights or a visit to the Sami Reindeer Herders! Relax with a soothing hot tub or sauna and enjoy your host's delicious cooking. Imagine the exhilaration of driving your own team of dogs. This is an experience for the open minded, for those longing for wilderness and adventure!



Location: Karasjok River, Finnmark.

Ask: Fiona for dates and prices January - April 2025/2026.



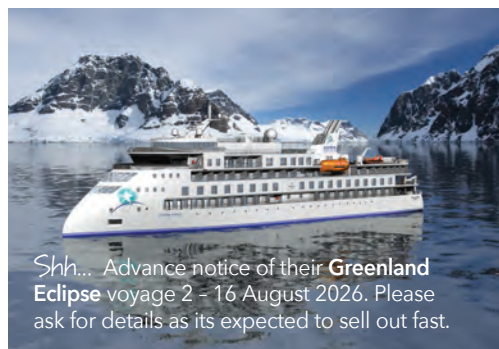
WILD LANDSCAPES OF WEST GREENLAND

Voyage by ship in and out of the northernmost capital in the world, **Nuuk** on the west coast of **Greenland**. With no roads to connect the townships, flying or sea travel are the only options available. The further north you venture along the west coast, the smaller and more isolated the settlements become. You'll push through the sea ice, calved from the enormous **Greenland** ice sheet to where few venture, to explore hidden bays glittering with icebergs. On this voyage, we visit remote Inuit hamlets and settlements, where the locals still practice traditional hunting methods.

UK to UK dates: 15 - 30 August 2025.

Price from: £14,565 per person including flights and early booking discount - book by 30 September 2024.

Ship: 130 passenger **Sylvia Earle**.



Shh... Advance notice of their **Greenland Eclipse** voyage 2 - 16 August 2026. Please ask for details as its expected to sell out fast.



Dear Adventurer

As the last vestiges of summer fall away, I am just back from a fascinating trip to **Costa Rica** - topping off a really busy year of travel for me which included **Georgia, India, Antarctica, Southern Spain and Arctic Svalbard**. In the office it's also been the busiest year yet since inception - so never a dull moment! In this issue I hope you will enjoy reading about my travels and well as yours and work through my hand-picked travel stories from around the globe. Please be in touch if you'd like to know more. I've had a raft of bookings to **Georgia** after my trip last year so don't forget to be in touch if you have travel plans of your own to make.

Fiona Brijnath

Fiona Brijnath, Director

Hacienda Heaven

FIONA HEADS TO ANDALUCIA

"I feel as if I have fallen out of the sky and landed in the Garden of Eden" quotes my travel companion as we arrive at the extraordinary **Hacienda de San Rafael** in **Andalucia, Southern Spain** some 30 years after I first visited.

We had just walked into our stunning private pool villa, after a late-night drive from **Malaga** airport and were both in need of some 'timeless time'. Goodness me - did we get it...

We wound down with a bottle of chilled white amid the gentle chirruping of *ciudadas* and I slept as if floating on clouds, waking to the sound of cooing doves. As the sun rose to a cloudless sky, the tinkling fountain lured us out to breakfast on the cool terrace: freshly squeezed **Seville** orange juice and local honey, breads, yoghurt and deliciously strong coffee.

Later we swam lazy lengths in our private pool and lunched in the shade of our sit-out on spicy chilled gazpacho, hot buttered king prawns and the freshest of mozzarella salads before walking among almond and olive groves - working up an appetite for evening drinks on the terrace overlooking fields of sunflowers and courtyard dinner by candlelight.

Owned and run the by Anglo-Spanish **Reid-Mora Figueroa** family, this special little corner of paradise has been liberally sprinkled with magic dust by the gorgeous **Anthony** who is one of those people you just have to meet to understand why he is a bit of legend and why guests return to this oasis time and again.

Spend your days chilling by one of the several pools dotted around the olive and palm strewn gardens or snooze the afternoon away under a frangipani and jasmine sit-out. Visit an **Andalucian** horse breeder, an **Iberian** pig farm or hike the **Sierra de Grazalema**. Take a day trip to **Ronda** for gastronomy, wines and breathtaking town, hot air balloon in the **Arcos de la Frontera**, birdwatch in the **Coto Donana National Park**, track **Iberian** lynx or take a private bike-tour of nearby **Seville**. Of

course sherry bodegas and private family bull ranches are *de rigueur* if you're in this part of **Spain** as are flamenco in **Seville**, **Jerez** old town tapas for foodies and riding in **La Corbera**. Twice a week you can visit the **Real Escuela Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre** to see the stunning equestrian displays by the **Spanish** riding school and a visit to the world-famous **Alhambra Palace** and gardens is not a world away.

Be it for a special weekend, anniversary, milestone birthday or even an immersive week into authentic **Andalucian** life, I really do urge you to visit this quite extraordinary and exquisite corner of **Spain**.





En route from the **Hacienda** to **Seville**, high in the **Sierra Nevadas** as the road wound out of **Grazalema**, we stopped to hike among wild broom, flowering herbs and riots of wild begonias. Far below, vultures wheeled in the thermals of the perfect blue day. Wooded valleys and patchwork fields spread out before us as we spread out our fayre to picnic on delicious goat's cheese with olives and herbs, crackers and dried figs stuffed with almonds. Butterflies fluttered among pink orchids and giant yellow daisies, and all that could be heard in the distance - the low whine of a faraway engine toiling up the corkscrew mountain road.

Our trip ended in **Seville**, all charming narrow cobbled streets, gracious buildings and parks dripping with giant palms and huge blooming jacaranda trees. **Coral Del Rey**, the sister hotel of the Hacienda was our wonderful base. Too many great memories here - the stunning **Alcazar** and Cathedral, tapas on the street, tiny coffee houses serving thick black brews, the majesty of the **Plaza de Toros de la Maestranza** or **Bull Ring** with its informative museum stuffed with the bejewelled and heavily sequined clothes worn by the matadors of a bygone era.

I'd love to tell you more so... do get in touch for more details.

When:	Visit Spring and Autumn for glorious weather, not too hot, not too cold.
Plan:	A long weekend in Seville , a week at the Hacienda or combine the two - we will carefully curate your trip.
How:	Direct flights to Seville from London or fly to Malaga . Self-drive for those who like to be independent or we can organise private transfers if you prefer.
Wow factor:	Superb and special private guides to take you to bird watch, or visit a bull farm, horse breeder or sherry bodega not on the open market.
Price from:	£1860 per person for a week's stay including flights.

Rembrandt Van Rijn

A PAINTED SHIP UPON A PAINTED ARCTIC OCEAN

FIONA VISITS THE ARCTIC JUNE 2024



There was no way I could stay in my bunk with the banging and crashing of ice crunching and scraping on the hull. It's 2:30 am, bright daylight and I'm leaning crazily over the bow-sprit looking down onto numerous 'bergy bits' below us. I'm on **Rembrandt Van Rijn**, a rather beautiful three masted schooner built in 1921 as a herring lugger and now operating as a sail ship in polar waters. It's full Arctic summer - 24 hour daylight and we're attempting to circumnavigate **Spitsbergen**, part of the **Arctic's Svalbard Archipelago**.

As the plane dipped over the fjord to land in **Longyearbyen** the main town on **Spitsbergen**, already my excitement was building. After a night in an atmospheric trapper style hotel with its driftwood walls, cosy wooden bar, old photographs and trapper paraphernalia, I headed out next morning to dog sledge on wheels in the surrounding hills. After the obligatory hugging and harnessing of the dogs, we set off down a gravel miner's dirt track through valleys dotted with reindeer, vertiginous snowcapped peaks and verges full of flowers at either side. What a start to my **Arctic** adventure!

Longyearbyen with its informative museum and tranquil church on the hill was a great introduction to life up north and I enjoyed the frontier town atmosphere. Soon, however, it was time to stroll down to the port and settle into my cabin before heading to the bow as the ship slipped away from the pontoon.

We were 24 aboard with a superbly friendly crew and expedition staff of 12 to look after us - and so they did... with plentiful and varied buffet meals, hot drinks on tap 24/7 and some of the most memorable wildlife encounters I have ever had.

In **Krossfjord**, we took zodiacs ashore to a giant bird cliff in **14th July Bay** and strolling under its enormous green flanks observed a beautiful **Arctic** fox sporting a gorgeous grey body and white fluffy tail midway between winter and summer moult.

We went through a pod of over 1000 beluga whales (even our crew had never seen such a 'super-pod') and watched in delight as they came up and swam under the bow out of curiosity.



On our third day we had our best wildlife encounter of all - going close to shore in the zodiacs at **Danskoya Island**, we were examining the site of **Andrée's** failed 1896 balloon expedition to the **North Pole** when we spotted numerous tracks across the snow. So called *charismatic wildlife* was making its presence known! The next hour or so was spellbinding as we observed a polar bear at first peering over the top of a high snow ridge above us then sliding down and entering the sea to roll and play with the kelp, swim across the bay and end up on rocks on the far side to stop and eat a morsel of dead bird caught in between the boulders.

Leaving the bear, we sailed out of **Virgohamna** heading north once more as our captain announced the fantastic news - we will try to circumnavigate **Spitsbergen**. Stopping briefly to head ashore at **Torelneset** - my first visit to a walrus haul-out - we pushed on overnight into the **Hinlopen Strait** encountering more and more pack ice before being forced to turn back in the wee small hours after a thrilling ice navigation.



Heading north-west once more, we sailed along the 160kms long **Brasvellbreen Glacier** and spotted another bear at a distance on the pack ice - bottom up and head down into a seal blowhole - another highlight for all. We stopped at the abandoned ghostly trapper's buildings at **Kinnvika, Nordauslandet**, taking time to explore inside the bleak huts before hiking to a highpoint over **Murchisonfjord** and then an icy sail through choppy waters to **Sorgfjord** (Fjord of Sorrows) site of the most northerly Naval battle ever. Here during a visit to an old whaler's station it was fascinating to find some of the whaler's graves - having risen to the surface over time - still intact and unexcavated.

Towards the end of the trip, one evening we zodiaced round a point at **Magdalenafjord** to **Gullybukta**. A secluded bay at the opposite coast of the fjord revealed a large huddle of 12 walruses - the jumble of fat brown bodies was a sight to behold and the grunts, rumbles and strong wafts of fishy breath all lent atmosphere to the moment!

Our final days were busy. We went ashore at the curious northernmost scientific outpost of **Ny Alesund** and hiked below the spectacular cliffs of **Alkehornet** which guard the northern entrance to **Isfjord**. Here we had an incredible encounter with a family of **Arctic** fox cubs playing in the sunshine. Above us, the entire cliff face and beyond was covered in nesting birds: **Brünnich's** guillemots, black-legged kittiwakes, glaucous gulls, fulmars and little auks whirled and shrieked while fluffy white reindeer grazed on the grassy meadow below.

Some 878 nautical miles later, we moored up for the last time and as the plane dipped its wings over the fjord early next morning I held a strong conviction that I would come back.

When: Next similar voyage:
7 - 18 June 2025.

Price from: £6,875 per person UK to UK in twin private porthole cabin.

Wow factor: This is unlike any other polar voyage we offer - you will be one of maximum 33 guests landing in polar regions - the price represents incredible value for such a small group size.

Snippets



LATA

I recently attended the **Latin America Travel Association** four-day Expo near **London**. It was great to see so many of my overseas partners hailing from **Costa Rica to Chilean Patagonia, Uruguay to Bolivia** and beyond and to catch up on the latest news from all things **South America**. It brought home to me once again the importance of the unique relationship I have with them - all of whom demonstrate incredible passion for and knowledge of their countries as well as the professionalism and reliability required for me to deliver you a top-notch holiday experience.

CAMBODIA, VIETNAM, LAOS AND THAILAND RIVER CRUISE COMBO

Join a truly unique combo expedition sailing along all navigable stretches of the mighty **Mekong River** on this 21-night grand tour of **Indochina**. You'll travel on an ultra-shallow draft 14 en-suite cabin traditional brass and teak river vessel.

Voyage dates: 17 February - 10 March 2025.

Price from: £7,500 per person voyage only.

Ask: Fiona for details.





SRI LANKA WANTS YOU

From 1 October 2024, for the next six months, British citizens will receive a free visa on arrival for **Sri Lanka**.

Now is the time to tailor-make your touring holiday to **Sri Lanka** or why not take this pictured private fully staffed three-bedroom villa in **Talpe**, near **Galle**, with its own 200m oceanfront boundary?

>> **Speak to Fiona** for details.



FROM PORTUGAL TO PORTSMOUTH

This brand-new voyage sails from the spellbinding **Portuguese** capital of **Lisbon** to the quaint harbour towns of the **English Channel**. With an exciting itinerary across four countries and a calendar filled with unique activities, this voyage has something for everyone! Join 175 passenger purpose-built expedition ship **Ocean Albatros**, exploring the lesser-visited sides of **Portugal, Spain, France** and **England** before she heads to the **Arctic**. **Fiona** travelled to the **Channel Islands** on her in the spring so can vouch for her expedition credentials.



Voyage dates: 25 April – 3 May 2025

Prices from: £3,275 per person voyage only

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SOUTH GEORGIA ONLY

Zoom in on **South Georgia** on this **truly unique** voyage which embarks in **Buenos Aires**, spends six full days in **South Georgia** and three in the **Falkland Islands**.

This is a top voyage for wildlife photographers.



UK to UK dates: 20 October – 12 November 2025.

Ship: 114 passenger **Sea Spirit**.

Price from: £16,995 per person including flights.

RIDE CERRO GUIDO - CHILE

New for this year is an unforgettable all-inclusive 5-night horseback riding trip which will immerse you in the wild beauty of **Patagonia** in **Southern Chile**. Expert gaucho guides will take you riding for approximately 5 hours/12 miles each day, through breathtaking landscapes, all the while learning about the culture and traditions of the **Chilean gaucho**.

Season: October - April

Getting there: Travel to **Puerto Natales, Chile**.

Why not?: Replicate this in **Argentina** – ask **Fiona** about **Estancia Los Potreros**, one of the last remaining outposts of gaucho culture north of **Buenos Aires**.

Ask: **Fiona** for itinerary and prices.



Client COMMENTS



“The holiday was fantastic, everything worked out really well. Our guide, **Edison** was great and we felt that he really looked after us and was very knowledgeable. The **Amazon** was a highlight, **Sani Lodge** is the most magical place and am so glad that we stayed there - couldn't fault it. **The Galapagos** was also amazing, **The Beluga** was perfect. It was a privilege to see all the amazing fish and reptiles and birds that are making their home there. Overall, I would have to give the holiday a big thumbs up, it had been a bucket list destination for many years. Thank you so much for organising the whole thing for us, you did a fantastic job and I would definitely recommend **Far Frontiers Travel**. Until next time...”

Fiona Simson and Sarah Hancock - Ecuador and the Galapagos May 2024

“Thank you for organising everything so efficiently and being so responsive at all times. It really does make a difference to have a question answered or a call taken immediately. I realise that you must have a hundred other customers to take care of, but when your questions are answered as quickly as they were, then you cannot help feeling that you are being treated as the centre of attention. My overall expectations were exceeded... Thank you!”

Michael Beamish - Atlantic Odyssey on board Hondius March - May 2024



“Our trip was excellent. The **Greg Mortimer** is so comfortable and well laid out/organised. Getting on and off the ship for zodiac landings was so much easier than any other trip we have done. The restaurant/food and service were all extremely good. Our cabin was fantastic, Well **Fiona**, what can I say but how well all the arrangements worked. Your endless patience in answering all our questions and querying the ship's personnel, when necessary, was outstanding. As always, you have given us a very memorable experience with your company.”

Andrew and Judy Given - Wild Scotland on board Greg Mortimer May 2024



“I have just returned from an exciting voyage to **South Spitsbergen, Bear Island** and **Hopen Island** booked through **Arcturus** and it has been an amazing experience, especially as I have been trying to visit **Hopen Island** for the last twenty years. For me, this was the highlight of the trip, but there were many other amazing moments such as visiting **Bear Island** and seeing the many different types of animals from polar bears, walruses, whales, **Arctic** foxes and a great variety of birds. The flights worked well and a night spent in **Longyearbyen** before the voyage began was a good idea. Overall, I was very impressed with how **Arcturus** organised my holiday and can definitely recommend them.”

David Lawrence - East Spitsbergen, Hopen and Bear Island on board Ortelius July 2024

“I enjoyed **Georgia** and my guide **Teona** was super, highly experienced, great English. Your itinerary worked well. **Schuchmann's Wine Chateau** was most enjoyable. It was so interesting learning about the country's wine industry and how so many people have wine making facilities at their homes. Of course, the monasteries were fascinating as well. Again, thank you for all of your assistance. You are excellent at what you do and I hope to use your services again.”

Linda Jones from Canada - Georgia June 2024



“As I fly home from **Georgia** and the experiences are fresh in my mind let me send you some immediate reactions. In short, the programme, overall, worked brilliantly. In its pace, in the range of places visited, the quality of accommodation and, crucially, **Irakli's** guiding and high standard of driving. **Georgia** was certainly a good place to visit: it offers such diversity in a relatively small compass. The scenery was often stunning and the cultural richness amazing. The tourist infrastructure (and general national infrastructure) was more developed and better than I had expected. I found people that I met very courteous if sometimes of a quite serious demeanour. Of course the country has much to be serious about both around its borders and political leadership. Occasionally I experienced the old 'Soviet' approach to service provision in hotels but it was very much the exception. In particular, the younger generation of staff in hotels and restaurants were smiley, helpful and had generally good **English**. **Georgia** is a great place to go to - as you clearly found - for people looking for an active varied scenic and cultural holiday. Thanks for all you did to make my visit such a success. As ever you ensured that the arrangements were first rate.”

David Carter - Georgia May 2024

“Overall it was an amazing trip. Your partners were very reliable. We were met at every flight and taken to the airport with guidance at all times. The guides were good. In **Cairo** the **Museum of Antiquities** is amazing and definitely worth visiting. We totally enjoyed the **Dahabeya Roman** and actually sailed quite a lot. The crew were great and the food was fabulous! We are so happy we did not take the larger cruise ship. Getting off the boat in **Aswan** and going directly to **Abu Simbel** was worth it. The temples there are amazing! We absolutely loved everything about the **Old Cataract Hotel!** It was the best hotel room of the entire trip. We had a fabulous time at **Sharm el Sheikh** and loved that there was a coral reef just off the docks for convenient snorkeling.”

Mr and Mrs Gene Howard - Egypt May 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.**

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'.

